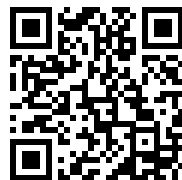

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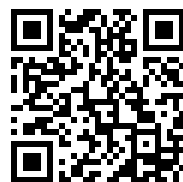
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CARLYLE'S TRANSLATION OF WILHELM
MEISTER

BY
OLGA MARX

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES OF THE
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY IN CONFORMITY WITH
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

1925

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TO MY MOTHER

832

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INTRODUCTION

Carlyle's translation of *Wilhelm Meister* aroused criticism as diverging and forcible as was to be expected of so characteristic a piece of writing. Of a dull performance there is little to say. But in this case, not only the enthusiastic commendations, but also the hostility of the censures point to the intrinsic interest of the matter in hand.

De Quincey in the *London Magazine* (Vol. X, August 1824) prefaces his discussion by comments on the manner of translation:

Nevertheless for the credit of anything which we shall allege against Goethe, it is necessary to declare our opinion very frankly that this translation does not do justice to the original work—which, however worthless in other respects, is not objectionable in the way in which the translation is so. . . .

He accuses Carlyle of provincialisms, chiefly Scotticisms, finds that he has adhered too closely to the original, an observation based on a cursory examination of the text, and concludes:

Not to insist however invidiously on errors of this nature, we shall conclude our notice of the English *Wilhelm Meister* with two remarks apparently inconsistent, but yet in fact both true: first, that the translation too generally by the awkward and German air of its style, reminds us painfully that it is a translation; and in respect to fidelity therefore, will probably on close comparison, appear to have aimed at too servile a fidelity. Secondly that strange as it may appear, the verses which are scattered through the volumes and which should naturally be the most difficult part of the task have all the ease of original compositions, and appear to us executed with very considerable delicacy and elegance. Of a writer, who has shown his power to do well when it was so difficult to do well, we have the more right to complain that he has not done well in a case where it was comparatively easy.

These remarks are certainly inconsistent, but in another sense than de Quincey indicated. The style of the translation is occasionally awkward, but the frequent inaccuracies, the misinterpretations arising from an insufficient knowledge of German

or from ignorance of the connotations of certain words, and, above all, the intentional omissions, stand in the way of absolute fidelity. The verses, however, notwithstanding the painstaking labor that wrought changes sometimes amounting to entirely new versions, are essentially unpoetic.

Blackwood in the *Edinburgh Magazine* (Vol. XV, No. LXXXIX, June 1824) eulogizes:

The book is now for the first time before us in an English shape, and we must begin by saying, that Goethe has for once no reason to complain of his translator. The version is executed, so far as we have examined it, with perfect fidelity, and, on the whole, in an easy and even graceful style; very far superior, we must say, to what we have been much accustomed to in English translations from the German. . . . In his future versions we hope this gentleman will please dispense with his Frau—Herr—Fräulein—Stallmeister—Amt—Stadthaus, and other purely German words with which, in this instance, he has here and there most absurdly and offensively interlarded his excellent English. Mr., Mrs., Miss, Master-of-the-horse, Magistrate, Town-house, and the like, are quite as good words in sound, and considerably more intelligible.

Among more recent critics, Ralli considers Carlyle's *Wilhelm Meister* as a "model of translation."¹ Under *Wilhelm Meister* he includes the *Apprenticeship*, published in 1824, and the *Travels* that appeared in the collection entitled *German Romance*, in 1827. The two are, however, very unequal, as the former, in spite of numerous infidelities, unapparent, of course, to an English public, reads well, while the latter, disclosing a far more intimate knowledge of German, suffers from literal translations of compound adjectives and from an adherence to the movement of the German sentence that destroys the rhythm of English prose.

What Goethe, to whom Carlyle sent his work, thot of the translation as such, is difficult to ascertain. He appended *Ein Gleichnis*² to a letter, written to Carlyle July 6, 1829, and so gives the impression that this figurative compliment was in praise of Carlyle's work. As *Ein Gleichnis*, however, had previously appeared in the *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände*, March 20, 1828, *Kunst und Altertum*, VI. Band, 2. Heft, s. 271, and in the *L'eco*, June 18, 1828, and was supposedly inspired by a French transla-

¹ Cf. Augustus Ralli, *Guide to Carlyle*, Vol. 1, p. 53.

² Cf. G. C., p. 148.

tion of Goethe's lyrics,³ it apparently was a convenient poem to serve more than one purpose, and must not be considered as a composition written specifically for Carlyle.

Goethe considered translation a cultural pursuit, useful intrinsically in bringing about the understanding of one people for another. *Weltliteratur* is the recurring term he employs to express his comprehensive conception of literature, unhampered by nationalistic restrictions. From Strassburg on, from the time of his turbulent youth, fermenting with Herder's ideas, the desirability of enriching one's knowledge and sympathies by renderings from the lore of other peoples, had been manifest to him. "Denn was man auch von der Unzulänglichkeit des Übersetzens sagen mag, so ist und bleibt es doch eins der wichtigsten und würdigsten Geschäfte in dem allgemeinen Weltwesen."⁴

Carlyle, the earnest and dauntless pioneer, blazing a trail, for the appreciation of German literature in England, was dear to his heart. Considered in this larger aspect of prophet of new ideas, the actual minute inspection of his translation shrank to minor importance. Goethe did not attempt it:

Meine hohen Jahre jedoch, mit so vielen unabwendbaren Obliegenheiten immerfort beladen, hinderten mich an einer ruhigen Vergleichung Ihrer Bearbeitung mit dem Originaltext, welches vielleicht für mich eine schwerere Aufgabe seyn möchte, als für irgend einen dritten der deutschen und englischen Literatur gründlich Befreundeten.⁵

The purpose of the following investigation, the subject of which was suggested to me by Professor Kurrelmeyer, is a detailed study of the accuracy and style of Carlyle's translation; an attempt to classify the errors under logical headings, which yield a clue to their causes; and the suggestion that in literary labor apparently mechanical and devoid of originality, the cultural background, even the philosophy of life held by the translator, are, to a certain extent, involuntarily revealed.

³ Cf. *Briefwechsel zwischen Goethe und Zelter*, Vol. 3, p. 32.

⁴ Cf. G. C., p. 18.

⁵ Cf. G. C., p. 3.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- App. 1,2,3— Carlyle, Thomas: *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*. 3 vols. Edinburgh, 1824.
- Trav.— Carlyle, Thomas: *German Romance*, vol. 4 (containing *Wilhelm Meister's Travels*) Edinburgh, 1827.
- Ch. 1,2— Carlyle, Thomas: *Translations from the German*. 2 vols. London: Chapman and Hall, 1871.
- W. 21,22,23—*Goethes Werke*. Weimar 1898. Band 21,22,23.
- Wan.— *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre oder Die Entsagenden*, Stuttgart, 1821.
- E.L. 1,2— *Early Letters of Thomas Carlyle*, 2 vols. London, 1886.
- L. 1,2— *Letters of Thomas Carlyle*, 2 vols. London, 1887.
- G.C.— *Correspondence between Goethe and Carlyle*. London, 1887.
- C.E. 1,2— *The Correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson*. London, 1883.

CARLYLE'S GOETHE TEXT

When in 1824 Carlyle undertook his translation of *Wilhelm Meister*, there were extant three German editions of that work, any one of which he might possibly have used as his text:

N: Goethe's *Neue Schriften*. Berlin, 1792-1800, 7 Bände.

A: Goethe's *Werke*. Tübingen, 1806-1808, 12 Bände.

B: Goethe's *Werke*. Stuttgart, 1815-1819, 20 Bände.

B¹: Goethe's *Werke*. Wien, 1816-1822, 26 Bände.

B²: The *Doppeldruck* of B, identical in title and form.¹

The following passages serve to eliminate N as a possible text:

W. 21,57,1,2:² ein besonderer Freund vom Prächtigen. N, eine *besondere Neigung zum Prächtigen* B, a *peculiar inclination for magnificence*. App. 1,56,21.

W. 21,200,11: Empfindung, zu der er des andern Morgens erwachte N, Empfindung, *als er des andern Morgens die Augen aufschlug* B, disgust, *when opening his eyes next morning*. App. 1,197,8,9.

The following passages serve to eliminate A and B as well as N:

W. 22,181,10: ganz allein. NAB¹, *allein* B, *alone*. App. 2,180,17.

W. 23,190,14: Begebenheit. NAB¹, *Begebenheiten* B, *events*. App. 3,180,24.

W. 23,276,20: Saum. NAB¹, *Schaum* B, *foam*. App. 3,362,18.

The following passages eliminate B² as a possible text:

B 3,226,19: wie er *letzt*. wie er *jetzt* B² 3,226,19. *that of late* App. 1,223,10.

B 4,45,4: in *ihrer Art*. in *ihrer Arbeit* B² 4,45,4. *in their kinds* App. 2,176,4.

B. 4,207,21: *einer regellosen*. Seiner *regellosen* B² 4,207, 21. *of a lawless*. App. 2,333,30.

As far as the *Wanderjahre* are concerned, only the 1821 edition comes under consideration, as the enlarged *Wanderjahre* appeared in 1829, two years after the publication of Carlyle's translation.

¹ Cf. W. Kurrelmeyer: *Die Doppeldrucke der zweiten Cotta'schen Ausgabe von Goethes Werken*. *Modern Language Notes*, Vol. 31, pp. 275-280.

² Reference to page and line of Weimar edition.

CHAPTER I

ERRORS IN TRANSLATION

Carlyle's German studies were largely a matter of self-tuition. Initiated by dogged toil with grammar and dictionary, they were continued for a brief period by the less laborious method of lessons.¹ After only a year's application, he read *Faust* in 1820, then Schiller's works, and in 1821 published his essay on *Faust*, which initiated a new epoch in English criticism of German books.

With such scant preparation, characterized on the one hand by ardent interest and eager industry, but on the other by total lack of contact with German-speaking people and German environment, it is not surprising that Carlyle misunderstood a great many words and phrases in *Wilhelm Meister*, and translated almost as large a number inaccurately, because he had not the background to gauge their precise meaning. For, as the significance of many words is very vague, depending largely on the context in which they are used, the dictionary *per se*, may be a very disconcerting source of reference.²

There is, moreover, a short list of words, each one of which, as employed by Goethe, involves a definite theory of art or of life. To render such words crudely is to obscure more than superficial verbal significance.

Aside from these instances of more or less tangible error, there are cases, where the translation is too obviously a translation, devoid completely of that fluency of expression which is commonly considered the attribute of original composition. It was, of course, almost impossible and certainly inadvisable, to select for citation the numberless instances of awkward or flavorless trans-

¹ Carlyle took German lessons in exchange for French from Robert Jardine.

² Carlyle's dictionary was listed in the Anderson Auction Co. Cat. no. 1580: 65. *A New Dictionary of the English and German Languages, compiled from the best authorities.* 2 vols. in one. 8 vo., Leipsic, 1810. It was not available.

lations. Only such examples have been chosen as are strikingly offensive to the English ear, or utterly inadequate in comparison with the original.

The following lists are grouped roughly under four headings: incorrect translations, inaccurate translations, misinterpretation of words with a definite cultural background, and awkward translations. Where the errors are self-evident, no comments have been made. The arrangement is in the order of occurrence.

INCORRECT TRANSLATIONS

W. 21,8: *die ersten vergnügten Augenblicke*. App. 1,7: the *only* happy hour.

W. 21,20: *nachdem ich etwas erfahren hatte*. App. 1,19: after *a little*.

Here the sense is obscured, as *after a little* seems to indicate a lapse of time, while the original refers to the acquisition of experience.

W. 21,23: *alle verstohlenen einsamen Stunden*. App. 1,22: all my *stolen* hours of solitude.

Verstohlenen means secret rather than stolen, tho the similarity in sound is sufficient explanation for this misinterpretation.

W. 21,25: *vor Sonnabends*. App. 1,25: till *Sunday-evening*.

W. 21,39: *So sehr ich, wie billig, von der Partei der Christen war*. App. 1,34: However strongly I inclined *by nature* to the party of the Christians.

Wie billig should have been rendered in some such way as: as was fitting, as was to be expected, etc.

W. 21,40: *Wir verfielen gar bald auf das Trauerspiel*. App. 1,40: We very soon began to *grow tired* of tragedy.

W. 21,50: *Es gehört schon etwas dazu, wenn ein einziger Mensch klug und reich werden soll*. App. 1,50: *But something towards it is always done*, when any individual man grows wise and rich.

W. 21,53: *als sein sonst verständiger und geschätzter Freund*. App. 1,53: than his otherwise *more gifted* and valued friend.

W. 21,65: *dass wir den Eigensinn des Directors . . . vor-schützen können*. App. 1,65: we *can humour* the manager's caprice.

W. 21,77: *denn Sie scheinen mir beiderseits von der Natur*

bestimmt. App. 1,76: for you seem to me directed, *not more by your circumstances than by nature*.

Beiderseits refers to Mr. and Mrs. Melina, whose natural inclinations are toward a dramatic career.

W. 21,82: Ein ganzer Roman, was er an der Stelle *des Unwürdigen* morgenden Tages thun würde. App. 1,81: a whole romance of what he now hoped to do, instead of the *worthless occupations* which should have filled the approaching day.

Des Unwürdigen refers to Melina, not to occupations.

W. 21,87: einen *Dolch*. App. 1,85: a *sword*.

W. 21,92: *er wäre trostlos gewesen*, wenn ihm auch die nächtlichen Zusammenkünfte bekannt geworden wären. App. 1,90: *On discovering the nightly visits of his friend, Werner's anxiety increased to a painful extent*.

W. 21,92: mit *inniger* Bewegung. App. 1,90: with *interior* commotion.

Carlyle misread *inniger* for *innerer*.

W. 21,97: in *jedem* Kusse. App. 1,95: in *that* kiss.

W. 21,101: und finde, dass ich *von vorne anfangen* sollte. App. 1,99: I observe it ought to have begun *more cautiously*.

W. 21,113: Ich glaube wohl, *dass dir's leid thut, von hier wegzugehen*. App. 1,111: I can easily suppose *that thou art sick of staying here so long*.

W. 21,130: sein *ungeheueres* Dasein. App. 1,128: his own *wild and vast* existence.

Ungeheueres here signifies uncanny, mysterious.

W. 21,132: Für mich sind sie *weder Stufe noch Aufmunterung* mehr. App. 1,130: To me they give *neither pleasant recollections nor pleasant hopes*.

W. 21,139: Zum Nachspiel ward *ein Opfer* dargebracht. App. 1,137: For afterpiece *an opera* was given.

The *Opfer* as the subsequent passage in German explains, consisted of a sort of dedicatory epilogue, not at all similar to an opera.

W. 21,142: hielt sie *auf*. App. 1,140: took her *up in his arms*.

W. 21,145: ein paar *leichten* Pantöffelchen. App. 1,143: *tight* little slippers.

W. 21,159: Es scheint, als wenn *so etwas niemals nach Wermuth*

schmecken könne. App. 1,157: it seems as if *nothing else had ever such a tang of wormwood in it.*

W. 21,159: mit der grössten *Anmuth.* App. 1,156: with the greatest *dignity.*

W. 21,169: denn sie war, was ich mit einem Worte eine *Anempfinderin* nennen möchte. App. 1,167: for she was what might be called a *genuine Catholic in sentiment, agreeing with the views of all mortals.*

Subsequently corrected.

W. 21,186: hinunterfahren. App. 1,183: to *fall down.*

W. 21,199: der im *Rausche* nicht sehr lebenswürdig war. App. 1,196: not too amiable in the *uproar.*

W. 21,239: welchen Ausspruch dieser in der grössten *Devotion* aufnahm. App. 1,235: a precept which the manager received with the greatest *devotion.*

By *Devotion* an attitude of great respect is meant.

W. 21,241: der sich gewiss bald zum *ersten Liebhaber* qualificiren würde. App. 1,237: who without doubt would shortly become a *first-rate amateur.*

W. 21,258: Denn es währte *noch* lange. App. 1,254: *nor* was it long.

W. 21,293: Riesengestalten ziehen sich in *Pilze* zusammen. App. 1,296: giant forms contract into the size of *nuts.*

This rendering is, perhaps, a matter of preference in the figure of comparison.

W. 22,11: dass ihm niemand ein Haar krümmen, *vielweniger ohne seinen Willen abschneiden* solle. App. 2,11: that no one should touch a hair of his head, *much less send him off against his will.*

As it is here really a question of the Harper's beard, which is one of his idiosyncracies, Carlyle's interpretation hits wide of the mark.

W. 22,19: haben sie *niemals* verlangt. App. 2,19: and do *not* ask it.

W. 22,35: *geschäftig*, singend. App. 2,35: *diligently* singing (corrected subsequently).

W. 22,36: die *wunderlichen* Gesellen. App. 2,36: these *wonderful* companions.

W. 22,43: Ein *weiter* Mannsüberrock. App. 2,43: a man's *white* great-coat.

W. 22,58: das *Kleid*. App. 2,57: the white *surtout*.

The visual image of Natalia in a white coat was evidently ineradicable.

W. 22,73: er *hatte* sich's gefallen lassen, Sohn eines Königs zu sein. App. 2,72: As a king's son, he *would have* been contented.

The change of mode here perverts the meaning.

W. 22,88: meine *Besonnenheit*. App. 2,87: my *recollection*.

Carlyle may have been led astray here by connecting *Besonnenheit* with the reflexive verb *sich besinnen*, which means to recollect.

W. 22,96: *nicht immer*. App. 2,95: *never*.

W. 22,123: und *überhaupt* als Bösewicht. App. 2,123: but *chiefly* of villain.

W. 22,144: um die übrige Welt sich nicht mehr bekümmert, *als insofern man sie nutzen kann*. App. 2,144: *where you can be of service to it*.

This is probably a subconscious perversion of meaning, in accordance with Carlyle's own ideals.

W. 22,173: und von der *Neugierde* auf die neue Gesellschaft. App. 2,173: with the *newfangled* zeal of the others.

W. 22,199: trat . . . *in der schauerlichen dramatischen Winter-
nacht* wirklich recht unbehaglich auf. App. 2,198: made his
next entrance . . . *with the dreary wintry feeling of dramatic
condemnation*.

This is a case of overinterpretation. Goethe's reference to the gloomy winter's night, is merely to the general setting of the ghost scene in Hamlet. As Wilhelm had been warmly applauded before the above-mentioned *next entrance*, there could be no question of *dramatic condemnation*.

W. 22,251: Aurelia hatte die Rolle der Orsina auf eine Weise gespielt, *wie man sie wohl niemals wieder sehen wird*. App. 2,250: Aurelia had acted the character of Orsina, *in a way that few have ever witnessed*.

W. 22,276: Ich war unbeschreiblich *alterirt* und *afficirt*. App. 2,275: I felt unspeakably affected and *altered*.

Alterirt is derived from the French *altérer*, which, while it may mean, to alter, also means to disturb, or to discompose. It is in

this sense of mental trouble or annoyance that its German derivative is used.

W. 22,284: und *erlangte* nach und nach eine Fertigkeit. App. 2,282: and *longed* for the ability.

Confusion between *erlangen* and *verlangen*. Subsequently corrected.

W. 22,284: Ich habe es nicht mehr und kann *es mir nicht mehr* geben. App. 2,283: I no longer have it, *I no longer can impart it*.

W. 22,287: Der Sommer kam und alles wurde ernsthafter und *heisser*. App. 2,285: The summer came, and all grew *drier* and more earnest.

Goethe means that the first bloom of courtship with its mutual illusions was over and that passion burned higher. The English rendering seems to indicate a withering instead of a maturing process.

W. 22,304: so zerriss der *Jammer* mir das Herz. App. 2,302: *his moanings* tore my very heart.

Jammer refers to the sorrowful circumstances rather than to audible lamentation.

W. 22,306: die *Erkenntniss* meiner Gebrechen. App. 2,304: the *confession* of my faults.

Carlyle confused *Erkenntniss* with *Bekenntniss*.

W. 22,338: Sie waren *in jedem Sinne* gesammelt. App. 2,334: They had been collected *on my uncle's general principle*.

W. 22,342: und den er als den edelsten Stein einer *Naturaliensammlung* anzusehen bat. App. 2,337: and to which it gave the aspect of the noblest stone in the cabinet of some collector (subsequently corrected).

W. 23,7: und einem *schlichten* Überrocke. App. 3,7: and a *light* surtout.

The significance of *schlicht*, which emphasizes Lothario's simplicity of bearing and apparel, is lost.

W. 23,8: zu dem *natürlichen* Empfang. App. 3,8: with such a *cool* reception.

W. 23,68: aber das *behalte* ich mir vor. App. 3,66: but I *keep* this before me.

W. 23,73: und das *Laub der Eschen* war eben nicht weiter als an dem Tage. App. 3,71: the *ashen grove* had not grown larger since the day.

W. 23,121: schön gearbeitete *Schränke*. App. 3,114: *spaces* beautifully worked.

W. 23,150: das er bisher *nochmals* anzusehen nicht getraut hatte. App. 3,142: which hitherto he had *never* had the heart to look on.

W. 23,186: Ich sehe ihn, aber ich *übersehe ihn nicht*. App. 3, 176: I see him, yet I *see not over him*.

W. 23,202: durch die *nothdürftigen, immer seltsamen* Gebärden der Instrumentenspieler. App. 3,192: by the *mean and awkward* gestures of the performers.

W. 23,221: mir so *hasenfüssig* zu schreiben. App. 3,210: a letter so exceedingly *facetious*.

W. 23,226: worin wir, *wie* die Kobolde, auf's lustigste leben. App. 3,215: and there we live *with* the hobgoblins of the place.

W. 23,247: so *freventlich* und doch so *nothwendig*. App. 3,234: *frivolous* as they were *irresistible*.

W. 23,270: sein Herz war *weich*. App. 3,256: his heart was *weak*.

Wan. 28: mein *Pathe*. Trav. 53: my *patron*.

Wan. 50: *Bilderdeutung*. Trav. 66: *picture exhibition*.

Wan. 62: *Knappe*. Trav. 72: *squire*.

While *Knappe* does mean squire, the translation here is incorrect, as Goethe uses *Knappe* for *Bergknappe*, hence miner.

Wan. 65: aber es ist ja überhaupt kein ächter Genuss als da, *wo man erst schwindeln muss*. Trav. 74: But there is not in the world any truer enjoyment, *than at the moment when we are so made giddy for the first time*.

Wan. 118: die Augenblicke *drängten sich*. Trav. 107: every moment *was becoming full of business*.

Wan. 120: Ihr gefasstes Wesen verliess sie *nicht ganz*. Trav. 109: Her collected manner she *entirely* lost.

Wan. 140: wo viele *seinesgleichen* heranwachsen. Trav. 121: where many of his *equals* are placed.

Goethe by *seinesgleichen* obviously means other children. In the English the word-choice implies social equality.

Wan. 151: Wilhelm bewunderte das Bild und die *seltsame Fügung*. Trav. 127: Wilhelm admired the figure and its strange *combination*.

Fügung here signifies providence, good fortune, etc.

Wan. 176: *dass Euch dasjenige vereint was andere trennt*. Trav. 142: *you unite what others separate*.

Wan. 190: *und damit wir alles übergehen was aus dieser Betrachtung folgt; so betrachtet*. Trav. 151: *now omitting all that results from this consideration*.

Übergehen, just as *übersehen*, e.g., may have two opposite meanings: to omit or to observe carefully. The latter meaning is appropriate here.

Wan. 198: *in vollständiger Umgebung*. Trav. 156: *in complete isolation*.

Wan. 204: *das ich selbst erst gewahr geworden bin*. Trav. 160: *which I myself discovered first*.

Wan. 211: *Fasern auf dem Rock*. Trav. 163: *creases in his coat*.

Wan. 214: *ein gemachter Mann*. Trav. 165: *a firmset man*.

Wan. 216: *unverantwortlich*. Trav. 166: *indubitable*.

Wan. 254: *vielleicht in kurzem fühlbar*. Trav. 188: *perhaps discernible in the parts*.

Wan. 301: *dass man nichts lerne ausserhalb des Elements, welches bezungen werden soll*. Trav. 217: *that in learning anything its first principles alone should be taught by constraint*.

Wan. 302: *einige Pedanten*. Trav. 218: *some pedagogues*.

Wan. 351: *selbst St. Christoph schritt vorüber*. Trav. 248: *St. Christopher himself went by*.

The position of *selbst* in the German sentence indicates that it should be translated: *even*.

Wan. 354: *brachte . . . etwas Fugenhafes in das Ganze*. Trav. 250: *introduced something unnatural into the whole*.

Goethe speaks of an improvised song, which grows fugue-like in character. To call this *unnatural* is unwarranted liberty.

Wan. 416: *beym erfolgenden Einwandern*. Trav. 288: *by a subsequent emigration*.

Wan. 472: *einen halb-erwachsenen Sohn*. Trav. 304: *a grown-up son*.

Wan. 475: *so was müsse man Selbänder sehen*. Trav. 306: *It is thus that our other self should be*.

Wan. 540: der Maler . . . von *Gesicht zu Gesicht*. Trav. 346: *face to face*.

Gesicht here means scene or vision.

INACCURATE TRANSLATIONS

W. 21,40: eine *merkwürdige Albernheit*. App. 1,39: a *curious insipidity*.

Albernheit here signifies a foolish prank.

W. 21,42: wie *ängstlich* hatte ich die alte Hausmutter geschildert. App. 1,42: how *repulsively* did I paint the old housewife.

Repulsively is too unambiguous a word. *Ängstlich*, in this context, implies a timorous outlook upon life, the narrowed viewpoint of one tethered to a recurring round of domestic duties.

W. 21,132: *Strickleiter*. App. 1,130: *ladder* of my hopes.

Ladder conjures too secure a visual image. A rope-ladder is far more perilous. *Of my hopes* anticipates the interpretation of the metaphor.

W. 21,160: in welchem Wilhelm *eingekehrt* war. App. 1,158: which Wilhelm had now *turned his face to*.

W. 21,166: Ich *will dienen*. App. 1,164: I *will try*.

One of Mignon's outstanding characteristics is the passionate fervor to serve whom she loves. *Try* is a savorless substitute for her quaint earnestness.

W. 21,309: die *köstlichen* Stücke. App. 1,307: the *precious* works.

Precious is too heavy a word, applied to creative production as is here the case. Exquisite, for instance, would be more in keeping.

W. 22,21: man hatte sich selten *so wohl gehalten*. App. 2,2: our friends had seldom been *so pleasantly diverted*.

The sense demands: our friends had seldom done so well.

W. 22,30: der *bravste* Junge. App. 2,30: the *bravest* young man.

W. 22,31: Es ist *verdrüsslich*. App. 2,31: It is *pitiful*.

Annoying, irritating, etc., would have been more accurate.

W. 22,35: eine *sanfte* Beschränkung. App. 2,34: a *soft* limitation.

W. 22,60: in einer sonderbaren *Nähe*. App. 2,59: in a strange neighborhood.

Should be: proximity.

W. 22,149: und ich wünsche, dass Du mich *verstehen* mögest. App. 2,149: and I fear it may be difficult to make thee understand me.

W. 22,151: durch Leibesübung viel gewonnen. App. 2,151: gained much by *voluntary practice*.

W. 22,140: gefährlicher gewesen. App. 2,140: *would have been* so dangerous.

W. 22,226: das *interessante* Mädchen. App. 2,225: the beautiful spinster.

W. 22,233: Ich werde bei keiner solchen Vorlesung gegenwärtig sein. App. 2,232: I would not assist at such a reading.

W. 22,246: Bekenntnisse einer *schönen Seele*. App. 2,244: Confessions of a *Fair Saint*.

Had he meant *saint*, Goethe might easily have written: *Bekenntnisse einer schönen Heiligen*. The connotation of the word *saint* indicates a variety of religious experience far removed from the subtly introspective, psychological quality of these *confessions*.

W. 22,278: Wir blieben noch immer in *ziemlicher* Entfernung. App. 2,277: We still continued at a *frigid* distance.

W. 22,296: *abgeschmackte* Antwort. App. 2,294: a pitiful reply.

W. 22,297: dass ich als Gattin eines Mannes, der *ein Haus machen* müsste. App. 2,295: as the wife of a man who *must keep house* like other people.

Who must entertain considerably, who must practice hospitality, is meant.

W. 22,326: ihr *bestes Innerste* beinahe zerstörten. App. 2,322: sacrificed their most *substantial duties*.

W. 23,19: so dass ich davon meinen Leuten auch *was gönnen* kann. App. 3,19: *which might admit of relaxation*.

The entire social significance of the idea of sharing profit with those who have helped make it, is lost in this extremely inaccurate translation.

W. 23,20: in meinem *Baumgarten*. App. 3,20: amid my *fields*.

W. 23,25: seine *Litanei*. App. 3,24: his *eulogium*.

Wilhelm's vehement speech of accusation, which is referred to here, certainly contains no suggestion of the laudatory, which would justify *eulogium*.

W. 23,34: die *sonderbarsten* Bewegungen. App. 3,32: a *thousand* feelings.

W. 23,40: Die Geschichte des Menschen *ist* sein Charakter. App. 3,39: The history of every person *paints* his character.

W. 23,82: deren *verjüngtes* Bild. App. 3,79: whose *renewed* young image.

W. 23,96: aber er hatte *einen Grund* von Gutmüthigkeit. App. 3,93: there was a *touch* of goodness in him.

W. 23,121: die *Neugierde, die Wissbegierde* des Kindes. App. 3,124: the child's *newfangled* curiosity.

W. 23,190: in der grössten *Wehmut*. App. 3,180: in great *disquiet*.

W. 23,213: von diesen *wunderlichen Worten*. App. 3,203: of this *surprising* stuff.

W. 23,253: *auf das sonderbarste* erhellt und ausgeschmückt. App. 3,240: *magnificently* ornamented and illuminated.

W. 23,256: seine *innersten Angelegenheiten*. App. 3,243: its *interior movements*.

This stilted rendering strikes a chill to the warm earnestness of the German.

W. 23,269: wahr sind alle ihre *Verhältnisse* und ruhig alle ihre *Wirkungen*. App. 3,255: true are all her commandments and peaceful all her *influences*.

Wan. 4: dieses seltsame *Gesicht*. Trav. 39: this singular *pro-cession*.

Wan. 6: *zartgefärbtes* Unterkleid. Trav. 90: *mild-coloured* lower garment.

Wan. 19: sie *lauschend* umschwebten. Trav. 48: hover round *observing* them.

Wan. 85: die schönste *Besitzung*. Trav. 88: the fairest *spot*.

Wan. 97: in *Briefen*. Trav. 95: *sketches*.

Wan. 124: Dann *setzte er aus* diesen Punkt zu erwiedern. Trav. 111: then he *engaged* to explain this point.

It should be: then he failed to explain.

Wan. 181: ob sie sich *erhalten* habe. Trav. 145: whether it has *continued*.

It should be: *survived*.

Wan. 190: seine *Umgebung*. Trav. 151: his *familiar friends*.

Wan. 197: auf *gelinde Weise*. Trav. 155: *softly*.

Wan. 333: welches oben *sanft*. Trav. 237: which is *externally soft*.

Wan. 319: ein *sanftes* gemüthliches Lied. Trav. 229: a *soft* kindly song.

Wan. 535: Was wir von Fremden zu *erwarten* haben. Trav. 343: What we have to *dread* from foreigners.

Dread gives a sombre tone unwarranted by the German, which may mean expectation of good or ill.

MISINTERPRETATION OF CERTAIN WORDS

W. 22,158: die *Novellen*, nach denen er arbeitete. App. 2, 158: the *novels*, which furnished him with his materials.

This phrase occurs in a discussion of Shakespeare's sources. While the novel, according to Edmund Gosse,³ is a descendant of the Italian *novella*, it conveys a false idea to translate *Novelle*, which is practically synonymous with the Italian conception, by the term *novel*, which in German would be rendered *Roman*. The distinction between the two has been well worded: "Der Roman ist ein Kultur- und Gesellschaftsbild im grossen. Es handelt sich darin um ein Ineinandergreifen verschiedener Lebenskreise. Die Novelle hat in einem Kreise einen Konflikt, eine sittliche oder Schicksalsidee oder ein abgegrenztes Charakterbild darzustellen und die Beziehungen zum Ganzen nur anzudeuten. Die Geschichte, nicht die Zustände, das Ereignis, nicht die sich in ihm spiegelnde Weltanschauung sind wichtig."⁴ Goethe gives the essential characteristic of the *Novelle* in his definition: "eine sich ereignete unerhörte Begebenheit." Here the episodic element is clearly stressed. His theory he faithfully puts into practice, both in the short stories with which the *Wanderjahre* are interspersed, and in the tale specifically entitled *Novelle*. Quite apart

³ Cf. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, sub voce *novel*.

⁴ Cf. Paul Heyse u. Hermann Kurz, *Einleitung zum deutschen Novellenschatz*.

from the fact, however, that Carlyle's translation does not take into consideration Goethe's ideas, it is misleading also in regard to Shakespeare. For the *Histoires tragiques* (1570) of François de Belle-Joust, which, as the French transmission of the *Historia Danica* of Saxo Grammaticus, furnished Shakespeare or his predecessors with the plot for *Hamlet*, could surely be considered only as short stories—*Novellen*—but never as novels, in the modern, English sense of the word.

Wan. 359: *wahrhafte Märchen und märchenhafte Geschichten*. Trav. 253: *Antique Tales* or modern stories of the same fabulous cast.

Wan. 488: *Er las eine Folge ächter Märchen*. Trav. 314: He read them a series of genuine *Antique Tales*.

While the connotation of *Märchen* runs the gamut in various periods of German literature from elaborate allegory and pedantic morality tale to simple legend or fantastic invention, for Goethe only the two latter types come into consideration. During the Strassburg period, when his interest for folksongs and folklore was at its zenith, he shared Herder's belief that *Märchen* are the expression of folk-faith, force and instincts, and in a recension of Zachariä's *Zwei schöne neue Märlein*⁵ chides the author sharply for representing as *Märlein* his shallow and facile versification, infinitely removed from the naïve literature of people "who love with their bodies, think with their eyes and fight with their fists."

But Goethe later modified this Storm and Stress conception of *Märchen* so that, when he uses the term in the *Wanderjahre*, it no longer connotes naïve literature, but airy imaginings that conjure up floating visions, merging into one another imperceptibly as successive notes of music. True *Märchen* are in the nature of wish-fulfillment and make man forgetful of the iron-bound restrictions of reality. Goethe's own *Märchen*, famous as the prototype of those of the Romantic School, is a perfect literary demonstration of his theory.

The English translation of *Märchen* is doubly misleading. *Antique* unfortunately has the flavor of classical antiquity and calls to the mind tales of Homeric gods and goddesses. But even

⁵ Cf. *Frankfurter Gelehrten Anzeigen*, 1772, reprinted in August Sauer: *Deutsche Literatur—Denkmale*, nr. 7–8, p. 518–519.

taken simply as meaning ancient or belonging to olden times, it is too stilted a word to suggest the simplicity of the folk tales, which aroused the enthusiasm of the young Goethe, while it entirely ignores his latter interpretation, with which we are here concerned, as the quotations come from the *Wanderjahre*. The meaning could have been conveyed by so easy an expedient as fantastic, fanciful or imaginative tales.

AWKWARD TRANSLATIONS

W. 21,10: fiel endlich wie ein *Klotz*. App. 1,8: fell like a *mass of clay*.

W. 21,276: alle Arten mythologischer Schriften *wurden aufgeschlagen*. App. 1,273: all sorts of mythological writings *were turned up*.

W. 22,31: übrigens ist mir alles einerlei. App. 2,31: other things *I mind not*.

W. 22,57: und wenn ich dich *lieb habe*, was geht's dich an. App. 2,56: and if I *have a touch of kindness* for thee, what hast thou to do with it.

W. 22,121: bei denen er etwas zu *erinnern hatte*. App. 2,121: as he had anything *to say respecting*.

W. 22,122: wozu einem jeden der *Schnabel* *gewachsen* war. App. 2,122: for which any *tyro was adequate*.

W. 22,156: *goldene* Äpfel in silbernen Schalen. App. 2,156: *silver* apples in platters of silver.

W. 22,305: Wie der Wanderer *in den Schatten*. App. 2,302: as a traveller *in the dark*.

W. 22,316: ein *Zug* war es. App. 2,313: it was a *sudden force*, a *pull*.

W. 22,326: dass *liebvolle edle Menschen*. App. 2,322: that many *amiable noblemen*.

W. 23,55: Alle *immer wiederkehrenden unentbehrlichen* Bedürfnisse. App. 3,53: all those indispensable, and *still to be renewed* supplies.

W. 23,141: dieses *vortreffliche Frauenzimmer*. App. 3,132: this *gifted lady*.

W. 23,147: die arme Mignon scheint sich zu *verzehren*. App. 3,139: poor Mignon seems to be *decaying*.

W. 23,175: *Frauenzimmer* von verschiedenem Alter. App. 3, 166: *young ladies* of various ages.

W. 23,198: *gedenke* zu leben. App. 3,188: *think of* living.

W. 23,253: Wen bringt *ihr uns* zur stillen Gesellschaft. App. 3,240: Whom bring *ye us* to the still dwelling.

W. 23,268: ihre *ernsthafte* Gipfel. App. 3,254: their *solemn tops*.

Wan. 49: *wusste mich* zu entfernen. Trav. 65: *got me put away*.

Wan. 55: *hatte sich* gesellt. Trav. 68: *had joined himself*.

Wan. 147: Als die Stadt brannte, wollte man auch bey mir *flüchten und retten*. Trav. 125: When the town was on fire, some people wished to *snatch out their goods and lodge them here*.

Wan. 295: die *anfängliche* Beschränktheit. Trav. 214: the *commencing stintedness*.

Wan. 341: Als ein Gesang die Treppe *herauf scholl*. Trav. 242: a sound of vocal music *rolled up the stairs*.

Wan. 363: *zeigte sich* eine schöne Gestalt. Trav. 256: a fair form *displayed itself*.

Wan. 375: Die Thür des Seitenzimmers *ging auf*. Trav. 263: the door of the side-room *went up*.

Wan. 471: er *richtet sich ein*. Trav. 303: he *arranges himself*.

Wan. 485: Pfui, über's *Hocken*. Trav. 312: Fie on this *covering*.

Wan. 499: auf frischen *Wanderfüßen*. Trav. 321: with the fresh *pedestrian limbs*.

Wan. 531: seine Züge *traten entfaltet hervor*. Trav. 340: his features *looked forth unfolded*.

CHAPTER II

OMISSIONS AND SOFTENING OF GOETHE'S EXPRESSIONS

OMISSIONS

In the preface to *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1824) Carlyle states that his omissions were slight: ". . . except a few phrases and sentences, not in all amounting to a page, which I have dropped as evidently unfit for the English taste, I have studied to present the work exactly as it stands in German."¹ As a matter of fact, these "few phrases and sentences" amount to three or four pages, and include descriptions and ideas, unnecessary perhaps from the standpoint of plot, but essential for character delineation.

It is important to discover, as far as possible, to what extent Carlyle's expurgations were determined by *English taste* and how largely they were due to his personal propensities.

In isolated groups, like the one that centered about William Taylor of Norwich, sympathetic and active interest for German literature existed. On the whole, however, English criticism of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was hostilely disposed toward it . . . as far as it was known.² This attitude³

¹ Cf. App. 1, Preface, p. xvii.

² Translations of the works of Gellert, Klopstock, Haller, Gessner, Lessing, Wieland, Schiller, Goethe, and others, were extant.

³ Of the general state of apathy towards ideas in the England of the early nineteenth century, Matthew Arnold (*Essays in Criticism*, p. 157) says: "We in England, in our great burst of literature during the first thirty years of the present century, had no manifestation of the modern spirit, as this spirit manifests itself in Goethe's work or Heine's. And the reason is not far to seek. We had neither the German wealth of ideas, nor the French enthusiasm for applying ideas. There reigned in the mass of the nation that inveterate inaccessibility to ideas, that Philistinism,—to use the German nickname—which reacts even on the individual genius that is exempt from it." . . . "The great English middle class, the kernel of the nation, the class whose intelligent sympathy had upheld a Shakespeare, entered the prison of Puritanism, and had the key turned on its spirit there for two hundred years." (*Ibid.*, p. 158; cf. also p. 8.)

was due less to its actual content than to a certain unvarnished frankness in the discussion of love, and to the introduction of realistic details pertaining to food⁴ and clothing that to the English mind seemed unpardonably crude and even gross. The very translators of German works assumed a half-apologetic attitude towards their texts. In the introduction to his translation of *Agathon* (1773) John Richardson, *e.g.*, remarks that Wieland painted a seductive picture of love and passion and ridiculed virtue altogether too frequently;⁵ and the *Lady*, who translated the *Life of the Countess of Guildenstern* (1776) even takes the liberty of inserting entire sentences of highly moral import.⁶ Sara Austen's stern Puritanism condemned the so-called immoralities of German writers, and, at best, tried to prove that they were superficial rather than inherent. In this respect she even reluctantly accused Goethe, as her scruples dominated her literary appreciation.⁷

In the anonymous translations of *Stella* and *Clavigo* the style is considerably weakened, and in *Stella*, Luzie's confidential conversation with the Postillon is omitted. Nevertheless, one critic in the *Monthly Mirror* termed the plots and characters monstrous and immoral.⁸ On the basis of *Werther* (rendered from a highly sweetened and perverted French version), Goethe was attacked as a defender of suicide.⁹ Rosa Laurence, one of the early translators of *Götz*, reassures the reader in a conciliatory foreword that

⁴ In a criticism of Goethe's *Life of Himself* in the *Edinburgh Review* (1816) Germany is described as a land of Rhine wine and good ham, and its literature anathemized as mystic, immoral, and sentimental. In *Faustus: from the German of Goethe* (London, Boosey and Sons, 1821), *Vorspiel* and *Prolog* were omitted, because they were "repugnant to notions of propriety such as are entertained in this country" (cf. *Herrig's Archiv* 96, p. 246).

⁵ Cf. Georg Herzfeld, *William Taylor von Norwich*, p. 10. Wieland was criticized by his German contemporaries also for the sensual tone of his writings. Cf. *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*, 1763, Erstes Stück, p. 202.

⁶ Cf. Georg Herzfeld, *William Taylor von Norwich*, p. 3 ff.

⁷ Cf. W. Leopold, *Die religiöse Wurzel von Carlyle's literar. Wirk-samkeit*, p. 30.

⁸ Cf. A. Brandl, *Die Aufnahme von Goethes Jugendwerken in England*, p. 43.

⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

this play is free from the immoralities of *Werther*.¹⁰ But it was criticized as having "little interest, no morality and no use." Scott's translation is fairly faithful, but he omits Liebetraut's ambiguous love-song, kisses exchanged by Adelheid and Franz, Bible quotations, and modifies coarse expressions out of consideration for his prudish audience. In his preface (Edinburgh, 1799), he accounts only for his blue-pencilling of political allusions: "Some liberties have been taken with the original, in omitting two occasional disquisitions upon the civil law as practiced in Germany."¹¹

So Carlyle was following a well-established precedent in the matter of omissions, and was, moreover, undoubtedly acquainted with the storm-cloud of literary disapproval that burst upon every infringement of an unwritten code of accepted morals and manners of the printed page. A number of quotations from two of the most extensive criticisms of his translation, which appeared respectively in the *Edinburgh Review* and in the *London Magazine*, will show that even his pruning hand had spared too many riotous shoots for the English taste, which preferred its hedges and its literature well trimmed.

Concerning the book as a whole Jeffrey says: "the tissue of the story is sufficiently coarse, and the manners and sentiments infected with a strong tinge of vulgarity."¹² Anent the *Confessions of a Fair Saint*: "The first part is full of vulgarity and obscurity—the last absolutely unintelligible,"¹³ and he quotes the slippery conversation between Serlo and Philina, placing *pulling off her slippers* in eloquent italics.¹⁴ Into what execrations would he have launched, had the subsequent by-play, discreetly omitted in the translation, been allowed to stand?

De Quincey, in the *London Magazine*, is even more vindictive: "Suicide, adultery, incest, monstrous situations, or manifestations of supernatural power, are the stimulants to which he (Goethe) constantly resorts in order to rouse his own feelings—originally

¹⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 60 ff.

¹¹ Cf. *Dramatic Works of Goethe*, London 1850, p. 404.

¹² Cf. *Edinburgh Review* (Aug. 1823), p. 415.

¹³ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 440.

¹⁴ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 439.

feeble, and long before the date of this work grown torpid from artificial excitement."¹⁵ He quotes the description of Mariana's room and appends the verdict: "This is the room into which she introduces her lover, and this is by no means the worst part of the description: the last sentence is too bad for quotation, and appears to have been the joint product of Dean Swift and a German Sentimentalist."¹⁶ Concerning Teresa's revelations to Wilhelm, he has also somewhat to say: "We have already seen something of Mr. Goethe; else could it be credited that the most obtuse of old libertines could put into the mouth of a young unmarried woman, designed for a model of propriety and good sense, as fit matter for her very earliest communication with a young man, the secret history of her own mother's adulterous intrigues?"¹⁷ And finally comes the thunderclap of wholesale condemnation: "no other of Goethe's work is likely to be more revolting to English good sense,"¹⁸ with the expatiation: "The gods of Germany are too generally false gods; but among false gods some are more false than others: here and there is one who tends upwards, and shows some aspirations at least towards the divine ideal: but others gravitate to earth and the pollutions of earth with the instincts and necessities of appetite that betray the *brutal* nature."¹⁹

From these illustrations of contemporary criticism, it might appear as tho Carlyle's omissions had been a matter of wise foresight or a bit of forced deference to public opinion, but the evidence of his letters, written during that period, shows that his own bent accorded, in a measure, with the spirit of the times.

In his introduction to the Centenary edition of Carlyle's translation of *Wilhelm Meister*, Mr. Traill (after a quite unastute and superficial evaluation of the novel itself) assumes that Carlyle must *surely have appreciated and loved Philina*. But, as it is for the most part her words and gestures that are ruthlessly omitted or softened, it would seem that Carlyle cast no tolerant eye upon her dainty frivolities and light-hearted sinning, an assumption that is borne

¹⁵ Cf. *London Magazine* (Aug. 1824), p. 303.

¹⁶ Cf. *London Magazine* (Aug. 1824), p. 206.

¹⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 298.

¹⁸ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 190.

¹⁹ Cf. *London Magazine* (Aug. 1824), p. 109.

out by his correspondence. Goethe has drawn her for us with tenderness and humor: an unmoral person, selfish and generous, sly and true-hearted, and brimming with indomitable good spirits and whimsical mockery in the face of misfortune. Philine, serenely cracking nuts, after a violent attack by a lawless robber-band, or clicking about on her gay little heels, is a memorable figure, dear to the heart of Goethe, who could scarcely have drawn her so sympathetically, had he not regarded her with delight. But while Goethe was the true teller of stories, who found objective interest in the world full of curious things and people, whom he did not measure by the silver yardstick of ethics, Carlyle, unretrograde Puritan²⁰ that he was, demanded moral integrity, not only of his personal associates, but of the very characters in fiction. In speaking of Mahomet, for instance, he deplores his sensuality and the conception of a sensual paradise *the sorest chapter of all for us*. Thruout *Heroes and Hero Worship*, he emphasizes the stern qualities of truth, earnestness, and sincerity. The recurring use of a word points to a deep-rooted thot or feeling, which that word represents, and so it is significant that "sincerity" with the accompanying forms "sincere," "insincere," "insincerity," occurs quite commonly three or even five times to a page. His intense admiration for Schiller, whom he compares to Milton, "the moral king of authors," was based largely on the man's intrinsic uprightness; and these random instances of the appreciation of people and characters, for moral chastity, could be easily multiplied. What grace then could Philine find, who certainly did not indulge only "in unproved pleasures free?"

It was doubtlessly she and her entourage that repelled²¹ him so on the first reading of the book. To James Johnstone he writes (Sept. 21, 1823) "In the meantime I am busily engaged every night in translating Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*: a task which I have undertaken formally and must proceed with, though it suits me little. There is poetry in the book, and prose, prose forever. When I read of players and libidinous actresses and their sorry

²⁰ Cf. C. E. I., p. 40: "Believe me it is impossible you can be more a Puritan than I; nay I often feel as if I were far too much so" (1835).

²¹ Cf. Thomas Carlyle, *Reminiscences*, Vol. 2, p. 115; also App. 1, preface, p. xvii.

pasteboard apparatus for beautifying and enlivening the 'moral world,' I render it into grammatical English—with a feeling mild and charitable as that of a starving hyena. The book is to be printed in Winter or Spring. No mortal will ever buy a copy of it. N'importe! I have engaged with it to keep the fiend from preying on my vitals, and with that sole view I go along with it. Goethe is the greatest genius that has lived for a century, and the greatest ass that has lived for three. I could sometimes fall down and worship him; at other times I could kick him out of the room . . . "22

And to Jane Welsh (March 7, 1824): "I fear, however, you will never read it: the romance, you see, is still dull as ever. There is not, properly speaking, the smallest particle of historical interest in it, except what is connected with Mignon; and her you cannot see fully till near the very end. Meister himself is perhaps one of the greatest ganaches that ever was created by quill and ink. I am going to write a fierce preface, disclaiming all concern with the literary or the moral merit of the work; grounding my claims to recompense or toleration on the fact that I have accurately copied a striking portrait of Goethe's mind, the strangest and in many points the greatest now extant. What a work! Bushels of dust and straws and feathers, with here and there a diamond of the purest water . . . "23

It is well known that by this latter expression Carlyle referred to the philosophical and religious ideas he had derived from the book, and later more especially to that passage (of the *Wanderjahre*) concerning the three Reverences, which he repeatedly quotes. For in the Goethe-Carlyle combination, which presupposes a fundamental congeniality of spirit, there was in reality a profound difference in moral conceptions, which Carlyle overcame simply by exercising eclecticism and ignoring those aspects of Goethe, which did not accord with his own ideas.²⁴

²² Cf. E. L. II, p. 223.

²³ Cf. E. L. II, p. 269.

²⁴ Cf. Carré, *Goethe en Angleterre*, p. 143: "Inconsciemment, il transforme, il déforme la pensée du poète pour se préciser à lui-même son nouvel idéalisme. Il accorde une importance exagérée aux deux chapitres de la *Province* que Goethe a consacrés au choix d'une religion."

Years later, after Goethe's death, when Emerson wrote about him to Carlyle: "Then the Puritan in me accepts no apology for bad morals in such as *he*,"²⁵ Carlyle promptly answered: "Your objections to Goethe are very natural and even bring you nearer to me."²⁶

As for the accuracy with which he copied Goethe's work, this may well be questioned in the light of the subsequent omissions, quoted from the German:

Philine is sitting on a bench in front of the inn with Wilhelm and is vainly trying to induce him to respond to her caresses. The following passage does not appear in the translation:

W. 21,212 ff: Diesmal that sie ihm unrecht: denn so sehr er sich von ihr zu enthalten strebte, so würde er doch in diesem Augenblicke, hätte er sich mit ihr in einer einsamen Laube befunden, ihre Liebkosungen wahrscheinlich nicht unerwiedert gelassen haben.

After the attack of the robber-band, Philine is accused by her companions of cajoling the chief, by unfair methods, into leaving her property alone untouched during the wholesale looting. "Man wollte sie eine ganze Weile vermisst haben,"²⁷ writes Goethe too significantly for his translator.

Wilhelm awakes to find Philine lying asleep across the bed, very lovely in her disarray.

W. 22,4: Und wir wissen nicht, ob er seinen Zustand segnete oder tadelte, der ihm Ruhe und Mässigung zur Pflicht machte.

W. 22,144: "Mein lustiges Glaubensbekenntnis," says Philine. But Carlyle omits "lustiges," probably considering a confession of faith too solemn an affair to be so lightly termed.

The following long passage is omitted from a dialogue between Philine and Serlo, in the course of which the latter eulogizes her slippers, which we associate with her personality as intimately as the Greeks connected a Neptune with his trident or Diana with her quiver.

²⁵ Cf. C. E. I., p. 30; also Emerson's works, Centenary ed. vol. xii, p. 326 ff.

²⁶ Cf. C. E. I., p. 40.

²⁷ Cf. W. 22, 49.

W. 22,167: doch ist ihr Klang noch reizender als ihr Anblick. Er hub sie auf und liess sie einigemal hinter einander wechselweise auf den Tisch fallen.

Was soll das heissen? nur wieder her damit! rief Philine.

Darf ich sagen, versetzte er mit verstellter Bescheidenheit und schalkhaftem Ernst, wir anderen Junggesellen, die wir nachts meist allein sind, und uns doch wie andere Menschen fürchten, und im Dunkeln uns nach Gesellschaft sehnen, besonders in Wirtshäusern und fremden Orten, wo es nicht ganz geheuer ist, wir finden es gar tröstlich wenn ein guthersiges Kind uns Gesellschaft und Beystand leisten will. Es ist Nacht, man liegt im Bette, es raschelt, man schaudert, die Thüre thut sich auf, man erkennt ein liebes pisperndes Stimmchen, es schleicht was herbey, die Vorhänge rauschen, klipp! klapp! die Pantoffeln fallen, und husch! man ist nicht mehr allein! ach der liebe, der einzige Klang wenn die Absätzchen auf den Boden aufschlagen! Je zierlicher sie sind, je feiner klingts. Man spreche mir von Philomelen, von rauschenden Bächen, vom Säuseln der Winde, und von Allem, was je georgelt und gepfiffen worden ist, ich halte mich an das Klipp! Klapp!—Klipp! Klapp! ist das schönste Thema zu einem Rondeau, das man immer wieder von vorne zu hören wünscht.

The slippers are slurred again by two partial omissions:

W. 22,168: Ich will euch lehren bei meinen Pantoffeln was anders zu denken, which is rendered App. 2,167 "I will teach you how to use my slippers better."

W. 22,194: —hinunter singen und mit den Absätzen klappern.
App. 2,193: singing and skipping.

Philine's song, *Singet nicht in Trauertönen* is entirely omitted from the first version of the *Lehrjahre*:

App. 2,192: Philine all at once struck up a song with a very graceful, pleasing tune. [The subject was the praise of Night; the words at least were delicate and pretty but we are afraid our readers would not care to hear it.]

As it is, however, included in the 1839 version, and will be discussed subsequently, it is merely necessary to state here, that originally it was omitted.

This completes the list of omissions that are directly concerned with Philine. But the obvious unwillingness to translate passages or phrases that allude to any aspect of physical love, is manifested repeatedly:

W. 21,64: indem er sich von seinem Schrecken an meinem Busen erholte. App. 1,63: while recovering from his terror.

W. 21,111: Seine Lippen lechzten, seine Glieder zitterten vor Verlangen. App. 1,108: His frame quivered with emotion.

W. 21,181: die heftige Anklage des leidenschaftlichen Mannes. App. 1,178: the bitter accusations brought against her.

W. 22,210: seinen Mund mit lebhaften Küssen verschlossen, und eine Brust an der seinigen fühlte, die er wegzustossen nicht Muth hatte. App. 2,209: and his mouth was shut with kisses which he had not force to push away.

W. 22,211: Sein erster Verdacht fiel auf Philine, und doch schien der liebliche Körper, den er in seine Arme geschlossen hatte, nicht der ihrige gewesen zu sein. App. 2,210: His first suspicion lighted on Philina; but on second thoughts, he conceived that it could not have been she.

If these omissions are relatively unimportant save as they shed light upon the translator's proclivities, there is at least one (from the *Bekenntnisse einer schönen Seele*) which indicates a grave error in psychology and in artistic judgment.

W. 22,262: und ich wusste übrigens von der natürlichen Geschichte des menschlichen Geschlechts mehr, als ich merken liess, und hatte es meistens aus der Bibel gelernt. Bedenkliche Stellen hielt ich mit Worten und Dingen, die mir vor Augen kamen, zusammen, und brachte bei meiner Wissbegierde und Combinationsgabe die Wahrheit glücklich heraus. Hätte ich von Hexen gehört, so hätte ich auch mit der Hexerei bekannt werden müssen.

This is a most necessary chapter in the history of adolescence, and in a recital of this kind, where every shade of passing emotion is seized upon and analyzed, in order to afford a complete record of the mental development of a singularly intelligent and sensitive individual, such an omission is a notable flaw.

Altho early in his career Carlyle had cast aside the orthodox faith of his parents, he was deeply religious temperamentally, and too much imbued with reverence to permit a light word in matters of religion.

W. 22,273: da sie sich über den tollen Spektakel und über die verfluchte Komödie fast zu Tode lachen wollte. App. 2,274: she was like to die with laughing at the bedlam spectacle.

W. 22, 318: Sodann ergreift unsere Seele oft ein und das andere von den geistigen Bildern . . . *So lange man nichts Besseres hat, ist doch diese Übung nicht ganz zu verwerfen.* (Italicized words omitted.)

W. 23, 157: gar manches von Engeln, vom Knechte Ruprecht, vom heiligen Christe vernommen. App. 3, 148: many tales of angels, of Knecht Ruprecht and such shadowy characters.

The one other lengthy but insignificant omission in the *Apprenticeship* occurs toward the very end of the third volume.

W. 23, 307: Ja sie verdient diesen Ehrentamen vor vielen andern, mehr wenn ich sagen darf als unsere edle Tante selbst, die zu der Zeit, als unser guter Arzt jenes Manuscript so rubricirte, die schönste Natur war, die wir in unserem Kreise kannten. Indess hat Natalie sich entwickelt, und die Menschheit freut sich einer solchen Erscheinung.

This eulogy, at a point where the action was coming to a head, may have appeared supererogatory to Carlyle. Its absence in the English is not felt.

The numerous brief omissions in the *Travels* are of a different character from those in the *Apprenticeship*. For the most part they are so trivial as to appear unintentional. A few instances will suffice.

Wan. 100: und so werde ich auf Ihren Schreib-Näh-und Theetischen, an Ihren Negligees und Festkleidern gar manches Merkzeichen finden woran ich meine Reiseerzählung knüpfen kann.

Trav. 97: and so on their writing-desks, work-boxes and tea-tables I shall find many a symbol wherewith to connect the history of my journeyings.

Wan. 203: und sie eilten hinauf zu ihrer Mutter.

Wan. 362: Sie möchte schwerlich ihres Gleichen finden.

Wan. 548: Er wird sich ausbilden und einrichten, dass er überall zu Hause sey.

Striking, tho not unexpected, is the omission of *Die Pilgernde Törinn*, a title which appears in English as *The Foolish Pilgrims*, a misprint for *Pilgrimage*. Of this Carlyle writes:

"The quaint, fitful and most dainty story of *The Foolish Pilgrims*, with which our two friends now occupied their morning we feel ourselves constrained, not unreluctantly, by certain grave calculations, to reserve for some future and better season."²⁸

²⁸ Cf. Trav., p. 290.

A translation, however, did not appear in the 1839 version of the *Travels* or at any other time. The story is not characteristic of Goethe inasmuch as it is only a free rendering from the French. In 1789 *La folle en Pèlérinage* appeared in Leuchsenring's *Cahiers de Lecture*. November, 1797, Goethe translated the *Romanze* contained therein. Even at that time he probably contemplated a recasting of the whole tale, which was published 1809 in the *Taschenbuch für Damen*. The theme of a woman who permits her own chastity to be questioned in order to preserve the moral integrity of every one concerned, culminates in a piquant un-Goethian conclusion, which Goethe himself termed a *französische Verirrung*.

As the *Wanderjahre* forms a collective work crowded with theories on art, pedagogy, industry, emigration, with novelistic suggestions and fragmentary stories, this omission, due perhaps to a personal aversion, coupled with a consideration of public opinion, does not perceptibly warp the texture of the book. Had Carlyle had before him the new *Wanderjahre* of 1829 the case would have stood otherwise. For here the increased number of apparently disconnected short stories have the definite scheme of illustrating various possible love-plots. So that the omission would have imperilled the plausibility of the whole plan.

Of the eleven poems prefacing the *Wanderjahre*, Carlyle omits three:

“Wie man nur so leben mag?
Du machst dir gar keinen guten Tag!”
Ein guter Abend kommt heran,
Wenn ich den ganzen Tag gethan.

Wenn man mich da und dorthin zerrt
Und wo ich nichts vermag,
Bin von mir selbst nur abgesperrt,
Da hab' ich keinen Tag.

Thut sich nun auf was man bedarf
Und was ich wohl vermag,
Da greif' ich ein, es geht so scharf,
Da hab' ich meinen Tag.

Ich scheine mir an keinem Ort,
Auch Zeit ist keine Zeit,
Ein geistreich-aufgeschlossnes Wort
Wirkt auf die Ewigkeit.

Ottilien von Goethe

Ehe wir nun weiter schreiten
Halte still und sieh Dich um:
Denn geschwätzig sind die Zeiten,
Und sie sind auch wieder stumm.

Was Du mir als Kind gewesen,
Was Du mir als Mädchen warst
Magst in Deinem Innern lesen,
Wie Du Dir es offenbarst.

Deiner Treue sey's zum Lohne
Wenn Du diese Lieder singst,
Dass dem Vater in dem Sohne
Tüchtig-schöne Knaben bringst.

Was wird mir jede Stunde so bang?—
Das Leben ist kurz, der Tag ist lang.
Und immer sehnt sich fort des Herz,
Ich weiss nicht recht ob himmelwärts;
Fort aber will es hin und hin,
Und möchte vor sich selber fliehn.
Und fliegt es an der Liebsten Brust,
Da ruht's im Himmel unbewusst;
Des Lebens Strudel reisst es fort
Und immer hängst's an Einem Ort;
Was es gewollt, was es verlor
Es bleibt zuletzt sein eigner Thor.

Of the why and wherefore of these omissions there is no evidence, but only plausible hypothesis. Carlyle was not particularly successful in his verse translations (a subject which will be discussed in a subsequent chapter) and may have thought that eight prefatory poems were enough to struggle with. He may have doubted their intrinsic value, or have been unable to render unto himself an account of their rather obscure style.

SOFTENING OF GOETHE'S EXPRESSIONS

As a direct corollary to the omissions stands the list of those expressions of Goethe which Carlyle softened in his translation. Here again the largest number is concerned with the terminology of passion. His various devices of circumvention do not always represent flagrant infidelities to the original, but they do result in flavorless phrases of insipid decency.

W. 21,5: Ich will mich dieser *Leidenschaft* überlassen. App. 1,3: I will abandon myself to this *affection*.

W. 21,43: die mir ihren goldnen Schleier zuwarf und *meine Blösse* bedeckte. App. 1,43: she threw her golden veil over me and called me hers.

W. 21,60: seine *Geliebte*. App. 1,60: *Mariana*.

W. 21,63: Es ahnte meinem *Geliebten*. App. 1,62: my poor *Wilhelm* . . . had warning.

W. 21,111: Seine Lippenlechzten, seine Glieder zitterten vor *Verlangen*. App. 1,108: His frame quivered with *emotion*.

W. 21,118: *Wollust* und Freuden. App. 1,116: *pleasure* and joys.

W. 21,141: ein wohlgebildetes *Frauenzimmer*. App. 1,139: a handsome young lady.

W. 21,199: nicht in den *anständigsten* Stellungen. App. 1,196: in no very elegant positions.

W. 21,211: mit dem lebhaftesten Ausdrucke des *Verlangens*. App. 1,208: with the liveliest expression of *fondness*.

W. 22,30: habe eine glückliche Nacht als *Ehemann* zugebracht. App. 2,30: been happy as he ought.

W. 22,30: habe mit *unsinniger Leidenschaft* dreingeschlagen. App. 2,30: had interfered in the affair with *thoughtless anger*.

W. 22,55: ein weites *Ehebette*. App. 2,54: a wide couch.

W. 22,81: noch einige Frauen, denen er aufwartet. App. 2,80: some other women whom he courts.

W. 22,87: sobald er seiner *Wünsche Befriedigung* gefunden hatte. App. 2,86: when he left her.

W. 22,99: wenn sie an mir herumtätzelten. App. 2,97: if they romped and made noise enough about me.

W. 22,166: und *Wädchen*. App. 2,166: and ancles.

W. 22,182: ihm *die erste glückliche Nacht* zusagte. App. 2,182: promised him a *happy interview*.

W. 22,211: und fand *sein Bett leer*. App. 2,210: and found himself alone.

W. 22,225: *in den Armen* eines jungen Officiers. App. 2,224: *in close contact* with a young officer.

W. 22,260: erzählte mir die Tante *Liebesgeschichten und Feenmärchen*. App. 2,260: and related to me love adventures out of *fairy-tales*.

W. 23,34: als artige *Hermaphroditen*. App. 3,32: but pretty *counterfeits*.

W. 23,91: ihre heimliche *Vertraulichkeit*. App. 3,87: their secret *correspondence*.

W. 23,101: eine *vertrauliche* Kerze. App. 3,97: any *social taper*.

Wan. 145: Sie wurden bald *vertraut*. Trav. 123: They soon grew *confidential*.

Wan. 373: sich seit einiger Zeit entschieden *guter Hoffnung* befand. Trav. 264: that for some time she *had evidently been as loving wives wish to be*.

There is one instance of reluctance to use the name of the Savior:

W. 22,114: als *Heiland*. App. 2,113: in the character of *Martyr*.

Carlyle has a tendency to introduce the word "little" in connection with Mignon. Her precise age is nowhere stated, but the maturity of her emotion for Wilhelm, her astute intuitions concerning him and her varying moods of childish wilfulness and womanly tenderness²⁹ and patience, point to the transitional period of adolescence. Whether this recurring "little" of Carlyle is a subconscious endeavor to remove Mignon, his favorite, from the sphere of love making by placing her definitely into the passionless realm of childhood, or whether it is used merely as a sort of diminutive, a term of endearment, is a matter for conjecture.

²⁹ Cf. Madame de Staël, *L'Allemagne*, p. 368: "elle l'aime comme une femme passionnée;" Baldensperger, *Goethe en France*, p. 174, refers to Mignon as "la femme-enfant de Goethe."

The repeated use of it, at any rate, tends to conjure up a false image. These are a few instances:

W. 23,80: Das *wunderliche* Mädchen. App. 3,78: The *little* girl.

W. 23,173: des *guten* Mädchens. App. 3,163: of the *poor little* girl.

W. 23,201: das *liebe* Mädchen. App. 3,191: that *dear little* girl.

W. 23,204: Das *liebe* Geschöpf. App. 3,194: The *dear little* creature.

CHAPTER III

ADDITIONS

In rendering poetry, the exigencies of rime and rhythm frequently necessitate the addition of words or phrases lacking in the original. An entire image may even be transmuted into one more in harmony with the spirit of the translator's language. In prose translations legitimate additions are generally made for two reasons: to elucidate the meaning, which may be quite clear in the original but obscure in a precise translation, or to emphasize a given expression, which would otherwise ring flat in the rendering. Almost all of Carlyle's additions fall under these headings, but there are times, when his imagination extends an image and introduces an adjective, or where he perverts the meaning of Goethe's text, perhaps unconsciously, in accordance with his characteristic ideas. So, for instance, when Goethe writes *diese Sibylle*, Carlyle translates *this frenzied sibyl*; where Goethe writes *verschwunden*, Carlyle has *vanished like a dream*. And, as an instance of travesty, he renders *auf dieser Erde* by *on this vulgar earth*. Goethe might have written: *auf dieser gemeinen Erde*, for his full realization of the relentless grip of the common-places and petty vulgarities of living, appears clearly in the famous lines of his *Epilog zu Schillers Glocke*:

Und hinter ihm in wesenlosem Scheine,
Lag, was uns alle bändigt, das Gemeine.

But earth was not sordid to this pantheist, and Carlyle's perversion here is in line with that of his poetry translation of Mignon's song: *So lasst mich scheinen bis ich werde . . .* (to be discussed later) and must be considered an intrusion on the original.

An addition is valuable only insofar as it actually adds something to the clearness and beauty of the text. Carlyle's additions add little or nothing, detract occasionally and are, on the whole, superfluous.

In the following list Carlyle's additions have been placed in brackets.

W. 21,6: ihr nehmt euch der Unmündigen, der Unvermögenden mit grossem Eifer an. App. 1,4: you connect yourself with minors and moneyless people [as if they were the chosen of the earth].

W. 21,12: nach einem kümmerlichen Genuss. App. 1,11: after a stinted [and chequered] season of enjoyment.

W. 21,21: wenn irgend ein Schlüssel stecken blieb. App. 1,20: [any cupboard left open,] or key standing in its lock.

W. 21,60: dass er noch auf dieser Erde wandle. App. 1,60: that he was still wandering on the [vulgar] earth.

W. 21,68: durch diese Sibylle. App. 1,67: by this [frenzied] sibyl.

W. 21,79: Beinahe wäre es eben so gut, vor den Thüren zu betteln. App. 1,78: It were almost as good to [take the staff and wallet] and beg from door to door.

W. 21,97: Da lernt' ich Deine Bescheidenheit kennen. App. 1,95: [Thy silence] testified to me thy modest honour.

W. 21,130: wie man sich selig preis't und entzückt stille steht. App. 1,128: [and men felt as we do] when delight comes over us, and we stop with rapture.

W. 21,131: zerschmettert. App. 1,129: [be crushed] and smote in pieces.

W. 21,133: Ihr Stand; ihre Schicksale. App. 1,130: Her situation, [the crookedness of] her destiny.

W. 21,138: und hatte nun Wald, Strasse und Zimmer, freilich etwas roh, hingestellt. App. 1,136: he had now represented woods and streets, and chambers, somewhat rudely it is true, [yet so as to be recognized for such].

W. 21,143: und wirklich hatte Wilhelm auch gezeigt. App. 1,141: in fact Wilhelm, [inferior as he was] had made it evident.

W. 21,145: die niedrigsten Füße. App. 1,143: the prettiest feet [and ancles].

W. 21,156: die wahre Eva. App. 1,153: [another] genuine Eve.

W. 21,227: aus diesen Verhältnissen sich loszureissen, und gleich zu scheiden, glaubte er Kraft genug zu besitzen. App.

1,223: these ties he believed himself possessed of force enough to break asunder [had there been nothing more to hold him, he could have gone at once].

W. 21,302: sanften Tadel. App. 1,300: meek, [though earnest] censures.

W. 22,7: des geistreichen Dichters. App. 2,7: of that ingenious poet [which I dare say you have heard of].

W. 22,20: findet er immer seine Nahrung. App. 2,20: he always finds food [and raiment].

W. 22,46: verschwunden. App. 2,45: had vanished [like a dream].

W. 22,93: den schwank-füssigen genügsamen Domherrn. App. 2,96: the taper-footed, [sleek] contented canon.

W. 22,117: was rührte und gefiel. App. 2,116: [what little there was] that moved and pleased.

W. 22,119: nicht mehr anders als schmeicheln konnte. App. 2,118: no longer could do otherwise than flatter [and deceive].

W. 22,152: als Meister aufzutreten. App. 2,152: that of Meister [or Master] does not suit me.

As the significance of the common noun *Meister* is not obvious in the English version, where the reader receives it merely as a name, the addition of a translation of the word was here necessary.

W. 22,259: und da nun aller übriger Genuss versagt war, suchte ich mich durch Augen und Ohren schadlos zu halten. App. 2,259: and as every other pleasure was denied me, I endeavored to amuse myself [with the innocent delights] of eye and ear.

Carlyle's suppressed desire that they should indeed prove innocent, expresses itself.

W. 22,261: und da alles neben mir so ganz natürlich zugging. App. 2,261: and as everything about me went along quite naturally [and commonly].

The natural is not necessarily commonplace.

W. 22,288: Narciss hatte weniger Kraft als ich. App. 2,286: Narciss had less [internal] force than I.

W. 22,292: in den luftleeren Raum. App. 2,290: in the [exhausted] airless space.

W. 22,320: Ich hielt den Grafen für einen gar zu argen Ketzer. App. 2,316: I looked upon the Count, [and those that followed him], as very heterodox.

W. 23,121: der ihn begrüßte. App. 2,115: saluted [the astonished looker-on].

W. 23,150: Sein Erstaunen über den ersten feurigen Blick. App. 2,142: His astonishment at the first fiery glance [of the luminary].

Wan. 64: mit Entzücken. Trav. 74: with the rapture [of old friends].

Wan. 85: einen, zwar im Ganzen abhängigen, doch aber mannigfaltig bald erhöhten, bald vertieften Boden bedeckte. Trav. 88: for the ground, sloping on the whole, had been regularly cut into a number of divisions, now raised, now hollowed in manifold variety, [and thus exhibited a complex waving surface].

As the visual image conjured by this addition is confused, it detracts rather than otherwise, from the original.

Wan. 99: Ich habe Geld erhalten. Trav. 97: I have [regularly] received money.

Wan. 171: hat man nicht von jeher die Furcht roher Völker. Trav. 139: [You say that reverence is not natural to man; now has not the reverence] or fear of rude people.

Wan. 259: durch welchen möglich ward ein lebendiges und kräftiges Andenken jener frommen Wallfahrt . . . aufzubewahren. Trav. 192: to retain . . . a vivid and strong remembrance of this pious pilgrimage, [without any aid of writing].

Wan. 413: and den Heerd zur Köchinn. Trav. 286: to the kitchen-hearth [to the landlady] and the cook.

Wan. 464: und die Mutter verstand alles weislich auszuführen. Trav. 299: and the mother had not wanted skill to execute wisely, by herself, [what the two had planned together].

Wan. 490: ein armer gleichgültiger Vogel. Trav. 315: a poor indifferent [undeserving] bird.

Wan. 535: eben dasselbe. Trav. 343: a similar [calamity]—speaking of the migration of peoples.

CHAPTER IV

TRANSLATION OF INCIDENTAL LYRICS

The possibility of achieving good verse translations has been deprecated by such representative poets as Dante, Cervantes, Herder, Grillparzer, A. W. Schlegel, and Shelley.¹ It is fortunate that in spite of discouraging theories, certain intrepid poets continue translating the poetry they admire and so make valuable contributions to their national literature, as for instance Gilbert Murray's *Euripides*, Schlegel's *Shakespeare*, or Louis Untermeyer's recent rendering of Heine's lyrics.

Under analysis it appears, that, tho it is desirable to retain as far as possible the metrical form of one's original, it is sometimes necessary to sacrifice meter to spirit. Butcher and Lang, in their translation of Homer's *Odyssey*, Mackail in that of Vergil's *Eclogues* even preferred prose-rhythm with its wider horizon, to the restrictions of definite meters.

Carlyle adhered closely to the forms of Goethe's lyrics, but while he caught the swing, the spirit often eluded him. His translations, where they are most accurate, are uninspired. Occasionally there are good lines, at times a good stanza, but for the most part his verse-translations strike one as dull and artificial. This also holds true for those scattered thru the stories comprised in *German Romance*, and for those passages of Schiller's poetry which he cites in his *Life of Schiller*.

With the exception of Philine's song, the humorous verses written in mockery of the amateur, and the lines recited by Friedrich at the close of the book, the poems of the *Lehrjahre* fall under two main headings: the Harper's songs and those of Mignon.

Carlyle's English of *Was hör ich draussen vor dem Thor*² does not

¹ Mrs. Haskell, in her dissertation on *Taylor's Goethe's Faust* has discussed former and current theories with excellent critical comments. She has treated the question of *padding*, Latinization of the English vocabulary, monosyllabic words, and related topics, in detail.

² Cf. W. 21, p. 205-206; App. 1, p. 202-203.

read like a translation, which is perhaps the highest tribute that can be accorded any attempt to turn poetry from one language into another. Comparison with Goethe's text shows that the essential content is well conveyed, the meter faithfully preserved and that even the difficult feminine rimes are rendered with considerable felicity. But while thot and movement have been adequately reproduced, the ballad-like simplicity of the original is destroyed, partly thru the more elaborate English vocabulary, partly thru altered phrases and images that impair the vivid, dramatic quality, characteristic of the German ballad. The main discrepancies of the translation are:

Schliesst Augen, euch, hier ist nicht Zeit
Sich staunend zu ergötzen.

Far other scenes my eyes must see:
Yet deign to list my harping.

The image of the harper closing his eyes to the splendor of the hall, in order to surrender himself to the making of melody, is sacrificed, and a colorless last line superimposed. The dramatic element of direct address, which lends variation to the German, is ignored by Carlyle.

Der Ritter schaute muthig drein,
Und in den Schoss die Schöne.

Each warrior hears with glowing heart
And on his loved one gazes.

Both the meaning and the picture are missed: the nobles did not necessarily gaze upon their loved ones. The harper's strain evoked contrasting responses in his audience: the knights beheld visions of future glory, while the ladies, with downcast eyes, cherished tenderer dreams.

Vor deren kühnem Angesicht
Der Feinde Lanzen splitttern.

Who 'cross the battle's purple sea
On lion-breast may bear it.

The altered figure is a good one, save that the dramatic image of lances shivered to splinters is missed. The 1839 and 1858 readings of 'cross are the same as the 1824 given above. The 1871 reading *cross'd*³ is incorrect.

In the translation of *Wer nie sein Brod mit Thränen ass*,⁴ Carlyle has, without detriment, rearranged the rime scheme of the German, so that his feminine rimes occur in the first and third, instead of in the second and fourth lines. In the second stanza "bring us" and "wring us" are perhaps not a happy expedient, but one, at any rate, not unexampled in English poetry, as for instance:

Let the wind take the green and the gray leaf
Cast forth without fruit on the air,
Take rose-leaf and vine-leaf and bay-leaf
Blown loose from the hair.⁵

As far as content goes, the specific image of one sitting weeping on the bed, is more poignant than the vague English. More serious are the distortions:

ihr himmlischen Mächte = ye gloomy Powers.

and

ins Leben = To earth, this weary earth.

which produce an atmosphere of depression foreign to Goethe.

It is not always easy to give the why and wherefore of the magic of poetry, for after one has accounted satisfactorily for the precise content and metrical scheme, there is an indefinable element that slips thru the strainer of more thoro examination. In *Wer sich der Einsamkeit ergibt*, however, a re-reading reveals that the haunting quality is due chiefly to two factors: to the subtle juxtaposition of the words *einsam* and *allein*, occurring once in each stanza like a musical theme around which the song is woven, and to the jingling repetition of rimes in the second and fourth lines of the first and third stanzas, and in the third and fourth lines of the second and fourth stanzas. Of these rimes *allein* is the

³ Cf. Chap. & Hall, Vol. 1, p. 106.

⁴ Cf. W. 21,217; App. 1,214.

⁵ Cf. Brander Matthews, *A Study of Versification*, p. 51.

emphatic word, which is paired alternately with *Pein* and *sein*, The effect is not at all monotonous, as might be supposed, but indescribably charming. In imitating the movement of the poem, Carlyle's technique was not deft enough to contrive a similar effect in English. His rime scheme is far more varied, there is padding in lines 3, 6, 7 and the repetition of line 15 is not in the original.

In the 1839 version *a* is omitted before *footstep* in line nine, and there is a slight formal change: The grouping into a stanza of the first eight lines has been dropped, so that the English now stands in two stanzas, the first containing eight, the second nine lines.

Ihm färbt der Morgensonne Licht
Den reinen Horizont mit Flammen,
Und über seinem schuld'gen Haupte bricht
Das schöne Bild der ganzen Welt zusammen.

For him the light of ruddy morn
But paints the horizon red with flame,
And voices from the depths of nature borne
Woe! woe! upon his guilty head proclaim.⁶

The last two lines disregard the image of earth falling in fragments about a guilty head, and introduce "voices" lacking in the original.⁷

An almost literal translation of *An die Thüren will ich schleichen*⁸ is good except for the first and last lines. *My steps may lead me* misses the color of the German *schleichen* and *ich weiss nicht was er weint* is sad with a vague passiveness, unlike the more aggressive *though I reckon not of his tears*.

In his review of Miss Simmons' monograph on *Goethe's Lyric Poems in English Translation prior to 1860*, Madison, 1919, Professor Kurrelmeyer directed attention to the two widely varying

⁶ Cf. W. 22, 13; App. 2, 12.

⁷ A possible way to retain this image might be:

For him the dawn's resplendent birth
In flames across the heavens reels,
The lovely image of the earth
Is shattered by the guilt he feels.

⁸ Cf. W. 22, 222; App. 2, 221.

versions of Mignon's song at the opening of Book III, published respectively in the editions of 1824 and 1839. The difference in both form and word-selection is striking, and furnishes one of the most significant instances of revision in the 1839 edition.

1824:

Know'st thou the land where the lemon-trees bloom?
Where the gold-orange glows in the deep thickets gloom?
Where a wind ever soft from the blue heaven blows,
And the groves are of laurel and myrtle and rose?
Know'st thou it?

Thither! O thither,
My dearest and kindest, with thee would I go.

Know'st thou the house, with its turreted walls,
Where the chambers are glancing, and vast are the halls?
Where the figures of marble look on me so mild,
As if thinking: Why thus did they use thee, poor child?
Know'st thou it?

Thither! O thither,
My guide and my guardian, with thee would I go. .

Know'st thou the mountain, its cloud-covered arch,
Where the mules among mist o'er the wild torrent march?
In the clefts of it, dragons lie coil'd with their brood;
The rent crag rushes down, and above it the flood.
Know'st thou it?

Thither! O thither,
Our way leadeth: Father! O come let us go!

1839:

Know'st thou the land where citron-apples bloom,
And oranges like gold in leafy gloom,
A gentle wind from deep blue heaven blows,
The myrtle thick, and high the laurel grows?
Know'st thou it then?

'Tis there! 'Tis there,
O my true lov'd one, thou with me must go!

Know'st thou the house, its porch with pillars tall?
 The rooms do glitter, glitters bright the hall,
 And marble statues stand, and look each one:
 What's this, poor child, to thee they've done?
 Know'st thou it then?

'Tis there! 'Tis there,
 O my protector, thou with me must go!

Know'st thou the hill, the bridge that hangs on cloud?
 The mules in mist grope o'er the torrent loud,
 In caves lie coil'd the dragon's ancient brood,
 The crag leaps down and over it the flood:
 Know'st thou it then?

'Tis there! 'Tis there,
 Our way runs; O my father, wilt thou go?

The ear is instantly struck by the difference in the rhythm of the two versions: that of 1824 is written in dactylic tetrameter, while that of 1839 is in iambic pentameter in exact imitation of Goethe's meter. As Carlyle was decidedly lacking in a feeling for music, he never achieved distinction as a poet,⁹ and his few poems display a marked want of rhythmical fluency, grace, and metrical initiative. In his verse-translations he adhered, in all cases, so closely to his texts that his deviation in the rendering of Mignon's song is all the more striking, and the question whether there were at hand models that could have influenced his metrical choice becomes pertinent. Madame de Staël in her *L'Allemagne*, the epoch-making book which directed Carlyle's attention and interest to German literature,¹⁰ has much to say of Mignon, and cites the first line of her song thus: *Connais-tu cette terre où les citronniers fleurissent*¹¹ and the opening passage of her *Épître sur Naples*¹² is deliberately reminiscent of Goethe's poem:

Connais-tu cette terre où les myrtes fleurissent,
 Où les rayons des cieux tombent avec amour,
 Où des sons enchanteurs dans les airs retentissent,

⁹ Cf. Augustus Ralli, *Guide to Carlyle*, Vol. 1, p. 57.

¹⁰ Cf. W. S. Johnson, *Thomas Carlyle*, p. 6.

¹¹ Cf. Madame de Staël, *de L'Allemagne*, p. 369.

¹² Cf. *Ibid.*, *Oeuvres inédites*, Vol. 3, p. 363 ff.

Où la plus douce nuit succède au plus beau jour?
 As-tu senti, dis-moi, cette vie enivrante
 Que le soleil du sud inspire à tous les sens?
 As-tu goûté jamais cette langueur touchante
 Que les parfums, les fleurs et les flots caressans, etc.¹³

These lines, which were so well known in London literary circles that the Countess of Blessington quoted the first four from memory¹⁴ (with one inaccuracy), were supposed to have influenced Byron in the verses prefacing the *Bride of Abydos*:

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
 Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime?
 Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle
 Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime?
 Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
 Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine;
 Where the light wings of zephyr, oppress'd with perfume,
 Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gul in her bloom.

Altho Byron vehemently denied the charge of plagiarism,¹⁵ a close comparison of the two passages indicates so great a resemblance in meter, vocabulary, and structure, as to convince the unprejudiced reader of a decided, tho perhaps unconscious influence of Madame de Staël on Byron. Both passages, for instance, begin with almost identical lines, and after a series of rhetorical questions come to a climax:

¹³ In his dissertation *Goethe und Byron*, München 1894, Siegfried Sinzheimer is under a misapprehension in speaking of "die freie französische Übersetzung, welche die Stael mitgetheilt hatte. Sie erlaubte sich nämlich, statt von blühenden Citronen von blühenden Myrten zu sprechen ('Cette terre, où les myrtes fleurissent')," etc. . . . Aber Byron lernte aus diesem Buche (de l'Allemagne) noch mehr über Goethe," etc. (Ph. 13, 14). We here received the impression that in *de l'Allemagne*, Madame de Staël gave a complete translation of the Mignon song beginning with the line "Cette terre où les myrtes fleurissent," while, as has been shown above, she gives only one line "Connais-tu cette terre, où les citronniers fleurissent" and reserves "connais-tu cette terre où les myrtes fleurissent" for her *Épître sur Naples*, a long poem of six odd pages, which can in no wise be considered as a translation from Goethe.

¹⁴ Cf. Countess of Blessington, *A Journal of Conversations with Lord Byron*, p. 311.

¹⁵ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 311.

C'est la terre d'oubli, c'est le ciel sans nuage.
'Tis the clime of the East; 'tis the land of the sun.

Whether or not Byron had actually read M. de Staël's lines he had at any rate heard them and this was sufficient for his quick mind and sensitive ear. For did not a *viva voce* translation¹⁶ of Goethe's *Faust* color indubitably the opening passage of *Manfred*!

When Carlyle was making his translation, there were then extant three prototypes, which must all have been known to him: the line given in *de L'Allemagne*, the *Épître sur Naples*, and Byron's lines prefacing his *Bride of Abydos*. All three may be said to have similar movement. He had read *de L'Allemagne* and probably knew the *Épître sur Naples*, which enjoyed a wide reputation. As for Byron, whose fiery personality and brilliant writing had electrified England, Carlyle's numerous critical references to him, his preoccupation with his life and his work,¹⁷ point to a thoro knowledge of all he had written. And so it seems at least highly probable that he got his rhythm from the models at hand and only subsequently returned to his policy of absolutely faithful verse-translation, and so furnished the 1839 version in iambic pentameter.

Tho this latter form necessitated some extra words, such as *deep*, line 3; *bright*, line 9; *loud*, line 16; etc., it will be conceded, that, on the whole, it is a more rounded and musical rendering than that of 1824. Rather unfortunate, however, is the shift of meaning in the refrain of the first two stanzas *thou with me must go*, instead of *with thee I would go*, which corresponded to the German *möchte ich mit Dir*, etc. This inaccuracy is, however, corrected in a third version,¹⁸ that of 1871, which varies from its two predecessors in the following respects:

1839: Know'st thou the land where citron-apples bloom.

1871: Know'st thou the land where lemon-trees do bloom.

¹⁶ Cf. *Byron's Works*, Vol. 4, p. 97: "I forgot to tell you that, last autumn, I furnished Lewis with 'bread and salt' for some days at Riodate, in reward for which (besides his conversation) he translated Goethe's *Faust* to me by word of mouth."

¹⁷ Cf. S. Chew, *Byron in England, His Fame and After-Fame*, pp. 66, 194, 221, 248 ff.

¹⁸ The 1858 London version follows the 1839 cited above.

1839: O my true lov'd one, thou with me must go.

1871: O my belov'd one, I with thee would go.

1839: And marble statues stand, and look each one.

1871: And marble statues stand, and look me on.

1839: O my protector, thou with me must go.

1871: O my protector, I with thee would go.

1839: Know'st thou the hill, the bridge that hangs on cloud.

1871: Know'st thou the mountain, bridge that hangs on cloud.

This final version with its awkward forms *do bloom* and *look me on* is the one followed in the Centenary Edition (30 vols. London, Chapman and Hall, 1896 ff.; vols. 23-24, 1899). There is in the 1871 volumes no indication as to when this revision occurred, as that edition reprints the 1839 preface and so gives the impression that it is a reprint of the 1839 edition.

Mignon's second song: *Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt*,¹⁹ the very incarnation of poignant yearning, is done into such prosy English as to lose every shred of its original charm and melody. In the text changes are rung on a few riming words, which run thru the texture of the poem weaving it together indissolubly. Carlyle disregarded this effect, for his translation virtually falls apart into three stanzas (alternate lines riming) and one inserted line: *And a foreign earth below me*. The words he chooses to express longing are elaborate and inadequate to produce the mood of dreamy nostalgia evoked by Goethe (lines, 2, 11, 12).

The subjective element enters strongly into Carlyle's rendering of Mignon's third song: *So lasst mich scheinen, bis ich werde*,²⁰ for no compromise due to the exigencies of rime could account for the perversion of lines three and four:

Ich eile von der schönen Erde
Hinab in jenes feste Haus.

Soon from the dreary earth I flee
Up to the glittering lands of day.

¹⁹ Cf. W. 22, 67; App. 2, 65-66.

²⁰ Cf. W. 23, 159; App. 3, 150.

where the English is just the reverse of the German. This is not a question of verbal significance alone, but of individual philosophy of life.

In the third stanza *jene himmlischen Gestalten* conjures a vision of hovering shapes, sufficiently vague to give scope to the reader's imagination, and so to permit not merely of receptive, but of creative reading; *those calm shining Sons of morn* is too definite a rendering. *Blessed forms*, an expression used by Tennyson (in *Sir Galahad*) would be an admirable transcription of the German. In the last line of the same stanza, the introduction of the word *sin* is an intrusion.

Umgeben den verklärten Leib.

The frame is purged from sin's alloy.

Goethe does not employ the word *Sünde*, a conception which did not trouble Mignon. By *den verklärten Leib*, he simply means that the tinge of grossness, inherent even in the most frail and lovely body, vanishes in the final radiant transfiguration. To borrow Tennyson's words again, a perfect expatiation upon the phrase *verklärten Leib* are the lines:

And stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armor that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

In the 1839 version of this poem, the following changes appear:

1824: Soon from the dreary earth I flee.

1839: Soon from this dusk of earth I flee.

1824: There first a little space I'll rest
Then ope my eyes, with joyful mind;
In robes of lawn no longer drest
This girdle and this garland left behind.

1839: There first a little space I rest
Then wake so glad to scene so kind;
In earthly robes no longer drest,
This band, this girdle left behind.

1824: They ask not *touching* maid or boy.

1839: They ask not *who is* maid or boy.

1824: The *frame* is *purged* from sin's alloy.

1839: *Our body* pure from sin's alloy.

1824: Through life, '*tis true*, I *have not* toil'd.

1839: Through *little* life *not much* I toil'd.

1824: Yet anguish long *my* heart has wrung.

1839: Yet anguish long *this* heart has wrung.

1824: Untimely woe my *cheek* has spoil'd.

1839: Untimely woe my *blossom* spoil'd.

It will be seen that in this second version, which is followed in all subsequent editions, many roughnesses are smoothed, and certain lines become definitely lovelier in words and movement, but the fundamental misinterpretations remain.

Philine's suggestive song, *Singet nicht in Trauertönen von der Einsamkeit der Nacht*²¹ was excluded from the 1824 edition out of consideration for the priggish reader.²² A gay, successful translation of it appears in the 1839 edition. By that time, thru his established self-confidence and growing reputation as the author of *Sartor Resartus* and of *The French Revolution*, possibly Carlyle's deference for the scruples of the reading public may have waned sufficiently to permit the publication of a poem, which might be termed saucy and piquant, but never vulgar in its implications.

The English of the little quip,²³ written at the expense of the would-be amateur, the Baron, follows the German closely in its spirit of gayety and in its light movement, tho it contains numerous verbal infidelities. So, for instance, *manch schön Stück Acker Land* is reproduced by *your copses, ponds, and rack-rent farms*, a line which is an expatiation upon, rather than a translation of the text. The same holds true of lines 3, 6, 7. In line 12, the apt pun *zwar arm, doch nicht ein armer Tropf* is lost, but the

²¹ Cf. W. 2, 193; Chap. & Hall, Vol. 1, p. 265-266.

²² Cf. App. 2, 192.

²³ Cf. W. 21, 293-294; App. 1, 291-292.

substitution *with long-necked purse, not brain of clay* is true to the spirit, if not to the letter of the original. The 1839 version shows one slight change in line 2, which is retained in subsequent editions.

1824: Must envy you *that* crest of arms.

1839: Must envy you *your* crest of arms.

The poems prefacing the *Wanderjahre*, and those incidental to the text, are of a different calibre from those in the *Lehrjahre*. They have a definite message to intelligence rather than to emotion, and they give it in verse, which becomes merely an apt vehicle for that, but is devoid of those over-tones of magic, which in poetry convey more than the actual word.

The eight prefatory poems which Carlyle translated (from the eleven at hand), for the most part give adequately the content of the originals. *Wüsste kaum genau zu sagen*,²⁴ etc., verses replete with that deliberate obscurity that characterized much of the work of Goethe's old age (*Faust II*, *Walpurgisnacht*, for instance) are very unsatisfactory in the English, where an unusual construction, such as, *if you task me very tightly* involves the meaning still more. The repetition in:

Sense that vexes, then assuages,
Now too light, and now too dark

for:

Ist ein Sinn, der uns zuweilen
Bald beängstet, bald ergötzt

is no improvement on the text.

In the couplet:

Does Fortune try thee? she had cause to do't
She wish'd thee temperate: obey, be mute!²⁵

which reads the same in the 1839 edition, the word *temperate* was changed to *abstinent* in the 1871 (Chap. & Hall) edition. This fact, insignificant per se, is another indication of hitherto unnoted innovations in that edition.

²⁴ Cf. Wan., prefatory poem No. 1; Trav., prefatory poem No. 2.

²⁵ Cf. Wan., prefatory poem No. 3; Trav., prefatory poem, No. 3.

The fact that all the prefatory poems were omitted in the 1829 enlarged *Wanderjahre* seems to signify that Goethe himself dismissed them as unnecessary, didactic appendages to a book so intrinsically moral as to render them superfluous.

The rendering of the artists' song²⁶ is felicitous, but Wilhelm's road song²⁷ with its variations is rather clumsily rendered into choppy English.

²⁶ Cf. Wan., p. 319 ff.; Trav. p. 229 ff.

²⁷ Cf. Wan., p. 353-356; Trav. p. 250-252.

CHAPTER V

CHANGES INTRODUCED IN THE 1839 VERSION

The numerous small changes in the 1839 edition of *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* do not, in any essential, alter the original version. Several misprints are corrected, long-winded constructions are changed, phrases and words are replaced by others, more apt or felicitous. The version seems to have been made rather from the standpoint of polishing the English, than of furnishing a more adequate translation of Goethe's text. The only significant changes occur in the incidental lyrics, which have been discussed in a preceding chapter.

W. 21,77: in *Verlegenheit*. App. 176: in a *strait*. Ch. 1,41: in *difficulty*.

W. 21,162: *herbei kommen*. App. 1,159: *cast up*. Ch. 1,84: *turn up*.

W. 21,169: eine *Anempfinderin*. App. 1,167: for she was what might be called a *genuine Catholic in sentiment, agreeing with the views of all mortals*. Ch. 1,88: for she was what might be called a *kind of spiritual chameleon, or taker-on*.

Carlyle's footnote (P. 88) regarding the German word, which he rendered by *spiritual chameleon*, reads: *Anempfinderin* (feeler-by, feeler-according-to) is the new untranslatable word poorly paraphrased so. A new German word used here, the like of which might be useful in all languages, for it designates a class of persons extant in all countries."

W. 21,181: das *schmerzlichste* Gefühl. App. 1,178: *most painful* emotions. Ch. 1,93: *painfullest*.

W. 21,188: Ein *wohlgebildeter* Mann. App. 1,185: a *good-looking* man. Ch. 1,96: a *handsome* man.

W. 21,198: ihre *Deutschheit* . . . *producieren*. App. 1,195: they would present their *Germanships*. Ch. 1,102: she would present her *Germanship*.

W. 21,215: *Ei*. App. 1,212: *aye*. Ch. 1,110: *ay*.

W. 21,251: *ausserordentlich*. App. 1,247: *exceedingly*. Ch. 1,128: *very much*.

W. 21,298: *das Wort*. App. 1,296: *word*. Ch. 1,153: *counter-word*.

W. 22,26: *glaubte nach und nach*. App. 2,26: *I did not doubt*. Ch. 1,180: *I doubted not*.

W. 22,26: *schien zuletzt fast unmöglich*. App. 2,26: *this seemed to me almost impossible*. Ch. 1,180: *it seemed as if impossible*.

W. 22,26: *in einer ununterbrochenen Folge*. App. 2,26: *through the piece entirely and all at once*. Ch. 1,180: *through the entire piece without interruption*.

W. 22,29: *wie man's einem ärger machen wollte*. App. 2,29: *I wot not how any one could treat a mortal worse*. Ch. 1,182: *I wot not how you could use a man worse*.

W. 22,30: *mit unsinniger Leidenschaft drein geschlagen*. App. 2,30: *had interfered in the affair with thoughtless anger*. Ch. 1,182: *he had struck into the affair with thoughtless indignation*.

W. 22,30: *auf eine doppelte Weise verwundet*. App. 2,30: *double wound*. Ch. 1,183: *double hurt*.

W. 22,30: *Gottes Erdboden*. App. 2,30: *on the surface of the earth*. Ch. 1,183: *on the face of the earth*.

W. 22,30: *wer*. App. 2,30: *how can any one*. Ch. 1,183: *how can one*.

W. 22,31: *übrigens ist mir alles einerlei*. App. 2,31: *other things I mind not*. Ch. 1,183: *'tis all one to me*.

W. 22,32: *mit so viel Überlegung*. App. 2,32: *till after much thought*. Ch. 1,183: *without much thought*.

W. 22,32: *den besten Weg*. App. 2,32: *the best made*. Ch. 1,184: *in the best condition*.

W. 22,35: *geschäftig, singend*. App. 2,35: *then diligently singing, they awaited*. Ch. 1,185: *and so awaited, singing as they worked*.

W. 22,36: *viel aufgeweckter*. App. 2,36: *much more pleasant*. Ch. 1,185: *much gayer*.

W. 22,47: *in seinen warmen Überrock gehüllt*. App. 2,46: *wrapped up in his warm surtout*. Ch. 1,190: *wrapped in his*.

W. 22,48: *nur mit sinkender Nacht kam der Zug . . . an*. App. 2,47: *ere the party*. Ch. 1,191: *when the party*.

W. 22,75: dem bedeutenden *Seufzer*. App. 2,74: the expressive *eiulation* (misprint). Ch. 1,205: the significant *ejaculation*.

W. 22,89: Wie wollen Sie das *auslegen*. App. 2,88: How do you *make that appear*. Ch. 1,212: How do you *demonstrate* that.

W. 22,97: und nichts war mir *verdriesslicher*, als dass ich mich nicht . . . und so mir *manche Mühe* ersparen konnte. App. 2,96: and nothing *grieved me more than that I could not* . . . and spare myself *so vast a quantity* of labor. Ch. 1,216: and *it did seem hard* that I could not . . . and spare myself *such a quantity* of labor.

W. 22,98: den *schwankfüssigen, genügsamen* Domherrn. App. 2,96: the *taper-footed, sleek, contented* canon. Ch. 1,216: the *sleek-fed, gouty* canon.

W. 22,98: den steifen aufmerksamen Geschäftsmann. App. 2,96: the *stiff and heedful* man of office. Ch. 1,216: the *solemn, heedful* man of office.

W. 22,110: ein *Kunststück*. App. 2,108: a *piece of art*. Ch. 1 223: a *stroke of art*.

W. 22,117: *blieben leicht*. App. 2,116: *staid easily*. Ch. 1, 227: *remained easily*.

W. 22,121: *bei denen er etwas zu erinnern hatte*. App. 2,121: *as he had anything to say respecting*. Ch. 1,229: *as he had anything to say upon*.

W. 22,123: *ungelenk und unbiegsam*. App. 2,123: *unpliant and unguidable*. Ch. 1,230: *unpliant*.

W. 22,139: in einem *Augenblicke* . . . in welchem er mit sich selbst *noch nicht einig werden konnte*. App. 2,139: at a moment when he *could be at one with himself*. Ch. 1,238: at a moment when he *could not yet be at one with himself* (rectifies an unintentional omission).

W. 22,140: einer *Sentenz*. App. 2,140: of an *apophthegmatic shape*. Ch. 1,239: of an *aphoristic shape*.

W. 22,144: *nichts als Geld*. App. 2,144: *nothing else but* money. Ch. 1,241: *nothing but* money.

W. 22,144: und dann auf eine vernünftige Weise *jeden Tag* *gethan*, was dir beliebt. App. 2,144: and the liberty to *do whatever* pleases you in reason. Ch. 1,241: and the liberty, *day after day, to do what* you like in reason.

W. 22,148: dass sich nichts mehr *dazu* setzen lässt. App. 2, 148: no objection can be made *against it*. Ch. 1,242: no objection can be made *to it*.

W. 22,155: an *einem geliebten Mädchen*. App. 2,155: in the woman whom he loves. Ch. 1,246: in the woman one loves.

W. 22,166: Das will ich *so natürlich* machen. App. 2,166: I will show it *quite naturally*. Ch. 1,251: I will show it *so natural*.

W. 22,166: und der Alte sollte nach dem Tact einschlafen. App. 2,166: and the Harper himself might be lulled to sleep. Ch. 1,251: and the first (husband) might dance himself to sleep.

W. 22,170: worüber viele Tausende *wegsehen*. App. 2,169: many thousands *overlook entirely*. Ch. 1,253: many thousands *altogether overlook*.

W. 22,183: der herrliche Genuss. App. 2,183: the *lordly* joy. Ch. 1,260: the *glorious* joy.

W. 22,207: ausgelassen, *wie man sie niemals gesehen*. App. 2, 206: was frolicsome *beyond what anyone had ever seen her*. Ch. 1, 273: was frolicsome *beyond all wont*.

W. 22,208: uns auf alten Monumenten noch oft in *Erstaunen* setzen. App. 2,207: strike us with *astonishment* when seen on classic monuments. Ch. 1,273: on classic monuments often strike us with *amazement*.

W. 22,216: sich über *die schönen, der Ordnung, nach*, wie eine Illumination, brennenden Sparren und Gebälke zu erfreuen. App. 2,215: at the spectacle of beams and rafters burning, like a grand illumination *so beautifully and regularly*. Ch. 1,277: at the spectacle of beams and rafters burning *all in order* like a grand illumination, *so beautifully* there.

W. 22,234: Perfid ist treulos mit Genuss. App. 2,233: Perfide means faithless with enjoyment. Ch. 1,287: Perfide means faithless with pleasure.

W. 22,237: mit der *grössten Zierlichkeit*. App. 2,236: with *all the grace imaginable*. Ch. 1,288: with *all imaginable grace*.

W. 22,251: *wie man sie wohl niemals wieder sehen wird*. App. 2,250: *in a way that few have ever witnessed*. Ch. 1,296: *in such a style as few have ever done*.

W. 22,259: indem *meinem Geiste* die ersten Hülfsmittel . . . gereicht wurden. App. 2,259: for the first means were then

afforded to *my spirit*. Ch. 1,300: for the first means were then afforded *my mind*.

W. 22,260: und wer Sitz . . . haben *wollte*. App. 2,260: whoever *chose to sit*. Ch. 1,300: whoever *would sit*.

W. 22,260: oft *erzählte* ich . . . wieder. App. 2,260: *Frequently I told*. Ch. 1,301: *Often I would tell*.

W. 22,261: ein Bild fast *bis zur Erscheinung* erhöhte. App. 2,261: painted out his form *till it was almost visible*. Ch. 1,301: painted out his form *almost to visibility*.

W. 22,261: so ganz *natürlich* zuing. App. 2,261: went along *quite naturally and commonly*. Ch. 1,301: went on in *such a quite natural manner*.

W. 22,262: und die Gebete *standen* . . . im Buche. App. 2,262: the prayers *were standing* there. Ch. 1,301: the prayers *stood* there.

W. 22,264: meine geringste *Freude*. App. 2,263: my smallest *entertainment*. Ch. 1,301: one of my smallest *amusements*.

W. 22,264: dass sie alles übertrafen *was man je* von schönen Kindern *gesehen hatte*. App. 2,264: had *seen their equals*. Ch. 1,303: *had seen their like*.

W. 22,265: dass die Eltern *nicht mehr davon einsahen*. App. 2,265: so that they *could see no more of it*. Ch. 1,303: so that they *saw no more of it*.

W. 22,265: durch *Übersendung* mancher Artigkeiten. App. 2,265: *by dispatching* to him many little dainties. Ch. 1,303: *by rendering* him many little dainties.

W. 22,269: *überstieg* . . . allen Glauben. App. 2,269: *surpassed* belief. Ch. 1,305: *exceeded* belief.

W. 22,269: ich *erlaubte* mir. App. 2,269: I *did not prevent* myself. Ch. 1,305: I *did not restrain* myself.

W. 22,271: *fieng* . . . zu sprechen an. App. 2,270: *began to speak*. Ch. 1,306: *began speaking*.

W. 22,271: von den andern *darüber* geneckt. App. 2,270: we were rallied by our friends *for this*. Ch. 1,306: we were rallied by our friends.

W. 22,271,272: das musste . . . *gehalten* werden. App. 2,271: we *kept*. Ch. 1,306: we *had to keep*.

W. 22,272: unwissende *Männer*. App. 2,271: ill-informed *gentlemen*. Ch. 1,306: ill-informed *men*.

W. 22,272: Als ich *die Augen ausgewischt*. App. 2,272: when I had cleared my sight. Ch. 1,307: when I had got my eyes cleared.

W. 22,273: beide *Männer*. App. 2,272: both of them. Ch. 1,307: both gentlemen.

W. 22,275: ohne *Hülle*. App. 2,274: without aid of dress. Ch. 1,308: without help of dress.

W. 22,276: Ich war unbeschreiblich *alterirt und afficirt*. App. 2,275: I felt unspeakably affected and altered. Ch. 1,308: I felt unspeakably affected, altered.

W. 22,276: *Arznei*. App. 2,275: some physic. Ch. 1,309: some medicine.

W. 22,277: der Himmel weiss *was und wieviel*. App. 2,276: I was feeling Heaven knows what and how. Ch. 1,309: I was feeling Heaven knows what.

W. 22,282: sucht ihm *abzumerken*. App. 2,280: seeks to notice. Ch. 1,311: seeks to discover.

W. 22,284: *erlangte nach und nach eine Fertigkeit . . . zu reden*. App. 2,282: longed for the ability to speak. Ch. 1,313: acquired by degrees some faculty to speak.

W. 22,290: *entsetzlich schwer*. App. 2,288: dreadfully irksome. Ch. 1,316: wofully irksome.

W. 22,290: wie . . . ich *empfinden musste*. App. 2,288: I was compelled to feel. Ch. 1,316: I was compelled to admit.

W. 22,297: sie war es auch *wirklich*. App. 2,295: it was so actually. Ch. 1,320: it was so in fact.

W. 22,302: als *Oberhofmeisterin*. App. 2,300: as governess. Ch. 1,322: as governess-in-chief.

W. 22,322: und *tändelte* auf meine eigene Art fort. App. 2,320: and dawdled forward along in my separate path. Ch. 1,334: and wandered quietly along in my separate path.

W. 22,323: *Lange Zeit*. App. 2,320: For a long time. Ch. 1,334: For a good while.

W. 22,324: mehrere *Bekannte dort*. App. 2,320: acquaintances along with her. Ch. 1,334: acquaintances with her.

W. 22,327: mit *heiterm Geiste*. App. 2,323: in the highest spirits. Ch. 1,326: in the cheerfullest mood.

W. 22,330: *am weitesten* von allem Lärm. App. 2,326: the most remote from noise. Ch. 1,337: the farthest from noise.

W. 22,330: *so viele Leute darin beherbergt.* App. 2,326: *to keep so many people in it.* Ch. 1,337: *to entertain so many people here.*

W. 22,335: *sich . . . verbinden kann.* App. 2,331: *join himself.* Ch. 1,340: *connect himself.*

W. 22,339,340: *individuellen Dunkel wird ausschliessende Beschränktheit.* App. 2,335: *individual darkness and narrowness of mind.* Ch. 1,342: *individual pretension and narrow exclusiveness.*

W. 22,342: *den er als den edelsten Stein einer Naturaliensammlung anzusehen bat.* App. 2,337: *to which it gave the aspect of the noblest stone.* Ch. 1,343: *this he gave me, he said, "as the noblest stone in the cabinet of a collector."*

W. 22,346: *ohne Lehrgeld zu der schönen Überzeugung zu gelangen.* App. 2,342: *reach a precious truth without having smarted.* Ch. 1,346: *reach a valuable truth, without smarting for my ignorance.*

W. 22,356: *niemals werde ich in Gefahr kommen, auf mein eignes Können und Vermögen stolz zu werden, da ich so deutlich erkannt habe.* App. 2,351: *never shall I run the risk of growing proud of my own ability and power, having seen so clearly.* Ch. 1,351: *There is no danger I should ever become proud of what I myself can do or can forbear to do; I have seen too well.*

W. 23,3: *Bestes, Innerstes ungeduldig hinstrebt.* App. 3,3: *inmost wishes are unweariedly endeavoring.* Ch. 2,1: *inmost wishes impatiently strive.*

W. 23,4: *Das Sicherste bleibt immer, nur das Nächste zu thun was vor uns liegt.* App. 3,4: *The surest plan is always just to do the nearest task that lies before us.* Ch. 2,2: *The safe plan is always simply to do the task that lies nearest us.*

W. 23,18: *Man hatte einigemal dem Kranken vorgelesen.* App. 3,18: *By times they had read a little.* Ch. 2,8: *At times they had read a little.*

W. 23,20: *einer Kugel, oder einem Dachziegel zu überlassen.* App. 3,20: *at the mercy of a bullet or a tile.* Ch. 2,9: *at the mercy of a bullet or the fall of a tile.*

W. 23,25,26: *er muss den augenblicklichen Beifall hoch schätzen.* App. 3,25: *he must prize his momentary approbation highly.* Ch. 2, 12: *he must prize his moment of applause.*

W. 23,33: dass ich . . . ablehne. App. 3,32: *I purpose to decline.* Ch. 2,16: *I intend to decline.*

W. 23,41: und Wilhelm hatte Ursache genug sich über ihre Kenntniss, ihre Bestimmtheit und über die Gewandheit, wie sie in jedem Falle Mittel anzugeben wusste, zu verwundern. App. 3,40: *and Wilhelm had sufficient cause to wonder at her knowledge and correctness, as well as the dexterity with which in every case she could devise the necessary means.* Ch. 2,20: *and Wilhelm had reason to wonder at her knowledge, her precision, the prompt dexterity with which she suggested means for ends.*

W. 23,44: Wilhelm. App. 3,43: *Our friend.* Ch. 2,21: *Wilhelm.*

W. 23,47: aber nicht eben den Muth, nicht eben den Ausdruck behielt er. App. 3,45: *he lost this liveliness of spirit, this expressiveness of aspect.* Ch. 2,22: *he lost this energy, this aspect.*

W. 23,46: geistreich. App. 3,45: *rich-minded.* Ch. 2,22: *sprightly.*

W. 23,46,47: konnte ich ihm recht anfühlen wie glücklich er war. App. 3,45: *I could perceive what happiness he was enjoying.* Ch. 2,22: *then I could see how glad he was.*

W. 23,48: so würde man wohl schwerlich diese Magd für meine Tochter halten. App. 3,47: *I should scarcely be prevailed upon to take this housemaid for my daughter.* Ch. 2,23: *you would scarcely take this housemaid for my daughter.*

W. 23,56: reden, was sie doch nicht zur Ausführung kommen lassen, sonst wäre eine treffliche Partie für meine liebe Therese geradezu gefunden. App. 3,55: *speak of what they will not suffer to be executed, else here would be a special match exactly suitable for my dear Theresa.* Ch. 2,28: *speak of what they will never execute, else here were a special match, the exact thing for my dear Theresa.*

W. 23,60: in's Unendliche vermehrt. App. 3,59: *augmented infinitely.* Ch. 2,30: *enlarged itself into infinitude.*

W. 23,61: die Geschichte, die ich mir so gerne selbst erzählte, mit allen ihren kleinen Umständen. App. 3,60: *the story, which I like so much to tell, in all its most minute particulars.* C. 2,30: *this story, which I often enough go over by myself, in all its most minute particulars.*

W. 23,66: *durch Zufall* zusammengekommen. App. 3,64: gathered quite *by chance*. Ch. 2,33: gathered quite *at random*.

W. 23,73: *ziemlich lange*. App. 3,71: *for a goodly time*. Ch. 2,36: *for a long time*.

W. 23,79: *weder erregen noch erhalten konnte*. App. 3,76: *calculate to cite nor maintain*. Ch. 2,39: *calculate to excite nor to maintain* (correction of a misprint).

W. 23,95: *eine Menge* kleiner Schulden. App. 3,91: *a multitude of* little debts. Ch. 2,47: *various* little debts.

W. 23,95: *deinem unersättlichen Heiss hunger*. App. 3,92: *your insatiable man*. Ch. 2,47: *thy insatiable maw* (correction of a misprint).

W. 23,109: *ziehst du dich zurück*. App. 3,105: *thou shrunkest*. Ch. 2,55: *thou shrankest*.

W. 23,122: *sagte er bei sich selbst*. App. 3,116: *said Wilhelm by himself*. Ch. 2,61: *said Wilhem to himself*.

W. 23,132: *seine Stimme hell, heftig und schreiend*. App. 3,124: *his voice clear, keen, shrill*. Ch. 2,66: *his voice clear, eager, shrill*.

W. 23,136: *dass du so wohl und so gut aussiehst*. App. 3,128: *so well and handsomely thou lookest*. Ch. 2,67: *so well and handsome thou lookest*.

W. 23,137: *Wie lebhaft sann er darauf*. App. 3,129: *How keenly he contemplated*. Ch. 2,68: *How zealously he contemplated*.

W. 23,138: *denen er sonst wenig Aufmerksamkeit gewidmet hatte*. App. 3,130: *which but for this he would have passed unheeded*. Ch. 2,69: *which but for this he would have passed without notice*.

W. 23,146: *die Geister unserer Vorfahren*. App. 3,138: *the spirits of our fathers*. Ch. 2,73: *the ghosts of our forefathers*.

W. 23,150: *einem reinen stillen See*. App. 3,142: *a pure and silent sea*. Ch. 2,75: *a clear and silent sea*.

W. 23,153: *Werde ich vor ihr auf den Füßen stehen können*. App. 3,144: *shall I not fail at sight of her*. Ch. 2,76: *shall I not fail, and sink to the earth, at sight of her*.

W. 23,156: *vor denen sie sonst einen so grossen Abscheu zu haben schien*. App. 3,147: *at which she used to testify so great a horror*. Ch. 2,78: *to which she had once such an aversion*.

W. 23,160: dieses schien fast ihn *umschaffen* zu wollen. App. 3,151: as if it almost meant to *fashion* him. Ch. 2,80: as if it would almost *new-fashion* him.

W. 23,168: *mich gleichsam zum Besten hatte*. App. 3,158: *to make a mock of me*. Ch. 2,84: *to make game of me*.

W. 23,171: *Sie verwirren mich ganz und gar*. App. 3,162: *you are confounding me entirely*. Ch. 2,86: *you more and more confound me*.

W. 23,180: manchmal *vor der Seele schweben*. App. 3,171: *often floated through his soul*. Ch. 2,90: *often flitted through his mind*.

W. 23,185: das *wunderbare gutmüthige Suchen*. App. 3,176: *extraordinary generous seeking*. Ch. 2,93: *wondrous generous seeking*.

W. 23,198: *Lazurstein*. App. 3,188: *azure-stone*. Ch. 2,99: *lapis-lazuli*.

W. 23,248: ein tieferes *Gefühl*. App. 3,235: *a deeper failing*. Ch. 2,125: *a deeper feeling* (correction of a misprint).

W. 23,249: *Bequemlichkeit*. App. 3,236: *insolence*. Ch. 2,126: *indolence* (correction of a misprint).

W. 23,251: *bestimmt hierüber zu erklären*. App. 3,238: *to explain it to you fully*. Ch. 2,127: *to explain it fully*.

W. 23,254: *die das Schönste, das Höchste hinauf, über die Sterne das Leben trägt*. App. 3,241: *which carries Life, the fairest, the highest of earthly endowments, away beyond the stars*. Ch. 2,129: *which carries forth, what is fairest, what is highest, Life, away beyond the stars*.

W. 23,255: *Todesgöttin*. App. 3,243: *goddess of death*. Ch. 2,129: *Death-goddess*.

W. 23,260: die *Säulen und Statuen*. App. 3,247: *turrets and statues*. Ch. 2,131: *pillars and statues*.

W. 23,300: ich dachte, er würde mich *schlagen*. App. 3,285: *I thought he meant to beat me*. Ch. 2,152: *I thought he would beat me*.

CHAPTER VI

CARLYLE'S TRANSLATION IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

That Carlyle recognized a difference between his translation of the *Lehrjahre* and that of the *Wanderjahre*, is attested first by his statement in a letter to Goethe: "This *Wanderjahre* which I reckon somewhat better translated than its forerunner,"¹ and secondly by the fact, that while he made numerous changes in his second (1839) version of the *Lehrjahre*, he altered *little or nothing* in that of the *Wanderjahre*. Nor is there any doubt where his own preference lay, for aside from the outstanding word *better*, there is that disparaging preface (to the *Lehrjahre* of 1839) which disclaims all merit save that of fidelity and deplores of the translation that: "it hung in many places, stiff and laboured, too like some unfortunate buckram cloak round the light, harmonious movement of the original; and, alas, still hangs so, here and there; and may now hang."²

In the same year he wrote to Emerson concerning the new version: "He has begun reprinting Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* too, the *Apprenticeship* and *Travels* under one, . . . One of these I call my best Translation, the other my worst; I have read that latter, the *Apprenticeship* again in these weeks."³ And a year later: "As to *German Romance*, tell my friends that it has been out of print these ten years . . . The comfort is that the best part of it stands in the new *Wilhelm Meister*."⁴ Here, of course, the *Travels* are meant.

There is no indication that Carlyle pondered unduly upon the theory of translation in all its puzzling complexities. His principle was "to follow the original, in all the variations of its style; . . . to alter anything was not in my commission. The literary and moral persuasions of a man like Goethe are objects of a

¹ Cf., Chap. & Hall, Vol. 1 pref. p. ix.

² Cf. Chap. & Hall, Vol. 1 pref. p. ix.

³ Cf. C. E., Vol. 1, p. 272.

⁴ Cf. C. E., Vol. 1, p. 292.

rational curiosity; and the duty of a translator is simple and distinct."⁵

To set about the business of translation with the purpose of being faithful to the substance and form of one's original is a simple and straightforward plan. But whereas the end is clear-cut, the means are obscured by many considerations arising from the difficulty in using the delicate tool of language. For, after tomes of careful analyses have been written in grammar, idiom and rhetoric, there remains that residue, irreducible to any erudite formula, which has been called variously the *spirit of a language*, the *Sprach-genius* and such other vague terms that only serve to emphasize a certain elusive quality that cannot be transmitted in translation.

Concerning the impossibility of good rendering, authors and scholars, at all times, have had much to say. Two non-contemporaries, for instance, of different nationality and literary tradition, Newman⁶ and Benedetto Croce,⁷ agree in maintaining the hopelessness of transferring a *chef-d'œuvre* from one linguistic medium to another.

Translations have been made from utilitarian, pedagogical, and artistic motives, and have been justified by a garrulous brood of reasons: to increase the vocabulary of one's native tongue; to extend the horizon of national literature; to satisfy popular demand for stories and plays; to bridge unproductive gaps in an author's career; to acquire individual facility in writing; to receive stimuli for original composition; to reproduce texts with a portrait-painter's delight in attaining a creditable likeness.

In translation Carlyle was confronted by a supreme difficulty: the rendering of compounds, which permeate the stylistic tissue of *Wilhelm Meister*, especially of the *Wanderjahre*. Their *raison d'être* lies partly in the synthetic character of the German language and partly in Goethe's tendency to exploit this characteristic for fresh word-combinations, which multiplied during the highly creative period of his old age.⁸

⁵ Cf. App., Vol. 1, pref. p. xvii.

⁶ Cf. Newman, *Idea of a University*, p. 286.

⁷ Cf. Benedetto Croce, *Aesthetic*, transl. by Douglas Ainslie, p. 111 ff.

⁸ Cf. Paul Knauth, *Von Goethes Sprache und Stil im Alter*.

The question of English compounds is a curious one, both from the viewpoint of history and recent development. Anglo-Saxon rivalled German in its power of forming self-explaining compounds. Thus a carpenter was expressed by *treow-wyrhta*, a butcher by *flaescmangere*, etc. The loss of these was accompanied by an indisposition to form new compounds.⁹ Mr. Sapir has it that "English is striving for the completely unified, unanalyzed word, regardless of whether it is monosyllabic or polysyllabic. Such words as credible, certitude, intangible, are entirely welcome in English because each represents a unitary, well-nuanced idea and because their formal analysis (cred-ible, cert-itude, in-tangible) is not a necessary act of the unconscious mind . . . A word like intangible, once it is acclimated, is nearly as simple a psychological entity as any radical monosyllable (say vague, thin, grasp). In German, however, polysyllabic words strive to analyze themselves into significant elements . . . Hence German has generally found it easier to create new words out of its own resources, as the necessity for them arose."¹⁰

Mr. Sapir in this disquisition has used a perfectly good word, which is not only a compound but a hybrid, and in general these statements are only partially true in the light of colloquial practice, for in English we employ many compounds, not always properly recognized as such: steamship, alarmclock, ticket office, bell boy, fire-proof, drawing-room, dare-devil, jailbird, match-maker, pickpocket, and a host of others. The heyday for the formation of new compounds was the Elizabethan age, which furnished us with many creations which have endured (telltale, break-neck, scarecrow, gainsay, praiseworthy, etc.) and more, which have passed out of use (crackhemp, findfault, wantwit, gazing-stock, chanceful).¹¹ Just why laughing stock should have survived, while jesting-stock and mocking-stock were consigned to the garret of historical riff-raff, is a matter for rather futile conjecture. The law of living usage has been at work—perhaps blindly—

⁹ Cf. T. R. Lounsbury, *History of the English Language*, pp. 85-88.

¹⁰ Cf. Edward Sapir, *Language, An Introduction to the Study of Speech*, p. 208.

¹¹ Cf. George H. McKnight, *English Words and Their Background*, pp. 168-173.

eliminating some expressions and accepting as current coin others, which are apparently no better.

In his investigation of *The Modern English Verb-Adverb Combination* (Stanford University Publications, University Series, Language and Literature, Volume 1, Number 1, Stanford University, California, 1920), Arthur G. Kennedy, in the great number of verb-adverb combinations, such as *catch on*, *cut out*, *break down*, *set off*, *take up*, etc., discusses the tendency of the relatively uneducated class to displace words which were introduced into the language by scholarly influence, by such as are mainly of Anglo-Saxon stock and in daily use by all classes.

(So e.g.) catch on—comprehend
chip in—contribute
turn down—reject
wind up—conclude¹²

He recognizes this as a Teutonic process and accords it an important place in the development of our language.¹³

Notwithstanding this evidence in favor of compounds, the fact remains that we do not either as individuals or as a people, continually create compounds from random words, to supply a felt need of the moment. A spontaneous coinage, moreover, might be tolerated, but when such a coinage is merely a literal translation of a foreign word combination, the result is too prone to strike a jarring note in the cadence of the sentence. So *the trumpet-sounding* (for *Trompetenschall*) or *seeming-boy* (for *Scheinknabe*) are not merely graceless, but, in the second instance, even meaningless.

In his many literal translations of compounds it is highly probable that Carlyle wished to give not only an impression of the synthetic character of the German language in general, but more particularly of the free creative use of words that characterized Goethe's old age. But it is impossible to transfer the technique of wood-carving to the hewing of marble, and in exceeding to the point of wanton exaggeration the limits of his linguistic medium, Carlyle turns his prose to something that is heavy and awkward

¹² Cf. Arthur Garfield Kennedy, *The Modern English Verb-Adverb Combination*, p. 41.

¹³ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

instead of rich but delicately wrought. Similarly in an illustrative comparison of Apuleius' *Cupid and Psyche* by the anonymous translator of the Loeb Classics and by Walter Pater, it will be seen that the former translation, which follows all the pompous windings of Latin rhetoric, fails to render the exquisite charm, which Pater, who seized upon the spirit of the tale, transmits in English as dew-fresh as his story. All the translator can hope for is to render, not the self-same style of his text, but the impression that style has produced upon him, and to do this by whatever means his sense of form permits.

William Taylor,¹⁴ Carlyle's immediate predecessor as a translator of German literature, and many others before him, had been attracted by the pregnant expression achieved by German compounds, and had tried to imitate it without realizing the effect in English. One of the difficulties of translation is that the translator thru continuous poring over his text, becomes so steeped in the style of the original, that dissociation from it grows increasingly difficult. A complete revision, after a lapse of time, is the only remedy for this evil, and even that does not always prove sufficiently efficacious, as the 1839 revision of *Wilhelm Meister* evidences. The Germanisms which crowd its pages are interesting in more than one respect: For one thing they show the influence of the German language on Carlyle, apart from the specific influence of any one German author. This fact should be kept in mind as a corollary to the evidence which Henry Pape presents in support of his thesis that Jean Paul's style was the source of Carlyle's.¹⁵ Secondly the distribution of the excellent free renderings of compounds and the abounding literal translations prove a confirmation in practice of his conception of a good translation. In the *Apprenticeship* circumlocutions of compounds predominate; in the *Travels* the opposite holds true. From this alone it would be logical to deduce, that Carlyle considered

¹⁴ Cf. Georg Herzfeld, *William Taylor von Norwich*, p. 28. "Ferner ist Taylor, der wohl auch von seiner deutschen Lektüre etwas beeinflusst war, die Einführung neugebildeter Worte eigentümlich, die dem Durchschnittsleser ebenso unverständlich bleiben mussten wie seine oft so barenrocken Einfälle."

¹⁵ Cf. Henry Pape, *Jean Paul als Quelle von Thomas Carlyles Anschauungen und Stil*.

a translation good, when it closely followed the style of the original. No attempt has been made here to make a statistical survey, by enumerating all of Goethe's compounds with their corresponding translations. Only striking instances have been selected from a great number at hand, to show Carlyle's method of procedure. In some cases a current compound has been placed in parentheses beside a similar compound coined by Carlyle. This juxtaposition demonstrates the frailty of the boundary line between words accepted and rejected by usage:

INSTANCES OF THE LITERAL TRANSLATION OF COMPOUNDS

W. 21,1: im *Nachspiele*. App. 1,1: in the *afterpiece* (aftermath).

W. 21,81: Du fühlst nicht das *zusammenbrennende zusammen-treffende* Ganze. App. 1,78: Thou feelest not the *co-operating co-inspiring* whole.

W. 21,90: *vordringenden* Geist. App. 1,88: *forecasting* mind.

W. 21,129: die empfängliche *leichtbewegliche* Seele. App. 1,127: the *lightly-moved* and all-conserving spirit.

W. 21,134: den neuen *Ausbruch*. App. 1,132: this new *out-breaking* (outburst).

W. 21,200: *wohlgemeintes* Dichterwerk. App. 1,197: *well-intentioned* poetical performance.

W. 21,217: *herzrührende*. App. 1,214: *heart-moving*.

W. 21,298: der *Schwarzkünstler*. App. 1,296: the *Black artist*.

W. 21,318: alle die *Halbmenschen*. App. 1,316: all *half-men*.

W. 22,9: wunderliches *Luftgemälde*. App. 2,9: fair *cloud-picture*.

W. 22,62: jene *leichtfertige* Schöne. App. 2,61: that *light-minded* beauty.

W. 22,95: *treuherzig*. App. 2,93: *true-heartedly* (whole-heartedly).

W. 22,141: der Gesellschaft eine ganz *neue Gestalt* geben. App. 2,141: he must entirely *new-model* and reform his company.

(Introduction of a compound where there is none in the text.)

W. 22,174: der *Zeit dienenden Halbschelm*. App. 2,173: *time-serving half-knave* (time server).

W. 22,186: *überschrie* sich nicht. App. 2,186: did not *overcry* himself (overwork).

W. 22,327: *Puppenwerk*. App. 2,323: *doll-work* (patchwork, hackwork).

Wan. 24: *wohlzubereitetes Essen*. Trav. 50: a *well-readied* meal (well-prepared).

Wan. 36: *Flügelthüren*. Trav. 58: *door-leaves*.

Wan. 56: *in die Augen fallende Dinge*. Trav. 69: *eye-catching* things.

Wan. 79: *Pferdebändigern*. Trav. 34: *horse-subduers*.

Wan. 179: *Hauptgegenstand*. Trav. 145: *leading object* (leading lady).

Wan. 181: *Musterbild*. Trav. 146: *pattern figure*.

Wan. 187: *geistigen ähnliche Mittel*. Trav. 149: *spiritual-like* means (ghost like).

Wan. 226: *Verjüngerungskunst*. Trav. 172: *youth-renewing art*.

Wan. 261: *durchgreifender Rührung*. Trav. 192: *heart-searching* emotion.

Wan. 262: *das Knaben-Mädchen*. Trav. 193: *the boy-girl*.

Wan. 262: *Scheinknabe*. Trav. 193: *seeming-boy*.

Wan. 262: *zigeunerhafte Gesellschaft*. Trav. 193: *gipsy-looking* group.

Wan. 364: *fabelhaft-furchtbar*. Trav. 194: *fabulously frightful*.

Wan. 280: *fröhlichklar*. Trav. 205: *mirthfully clear*.

Wan. 316: *wechselseitig-traurigen Beystand*. Trav. 227: *mutually regretful* alliance.

Wan. 316: *merkwürdig-verschlungene*. Trav. 227: *strikingly-intertwisted*.

Wan. 323: *diese weit um sich greifende Kunst*. Trav. 231: *this far-stretching art* (far reaching).

Wan. 357: *einer weit umherschauenden Laube*. Trav. 252: a *far-seeing* grove.

Wan. 374: *Trompetenschall*. Trav. 262: *trumpet-sounding*.

Wan. 525: *überlisteten*. Trav. 336: *overreaching*.

Wan. 535: *lebendig-nährenden Herdenbesitz*. Trav. 342: *life-supporting* household goods (self-supporting).

Wan. 542: *wunderthätiger Stelle*. Trav. 346: *wonder-working* places.

Wan. 545: *überkreuzen*. Trav. 348: *overnet* (overstep).

CIRCUMLOCUTIONS OF COMPOUNDS

W. 21,57: seine Stühle waren *uralt*. App. 1,57: His chairs were of *unknown age and antic fashion*.

W. 21,81: für ein *kummervolles und staubgleiches Dasein* erklärt haben. App. 1,80: a *painful, short and tarnished gleam of being*.

W. 21,110: *Taumelkelches*. App. 1,108: of that *cup of joy*.

W. 21,117: *vollsaftigen Körper*. App. 1,116: *full of vigour*.

W. 21,119: des *Ewiglebenden*. App. 1,117: of *Him that lives forever*.

W. 21,128: *unvereinbaren Dingen*. App. 1,126: things that will *seldom exist together*.

W. 21,297: einem beleidigten *Burgfrieden*. App. 1,295: an infringement of the *Burgfried, or Peace of the Castle*.

W. 22,18: das *Hauptcapital*. App. 2,18: the *crown and capital*.

W. 22,21: uns mechanisch *pflicht- und handwerksmässig* einschränkten. App. 2,21: and playing mechanically, as if it were a *barren duty or some handicraft employment*.

W. 22,34: eine grosse, sanft abhängige *Waldwiese*. App. 2,34: a *spacious green, sloping softly in the middle of the forest*.

W. 22,66: eine *unaussprechlich* fließende Harmonie. App. 2,65: a *flowing harmony which could not be described*.

W. 22,90: Das *Fegefeuer*. App. 2,89: The *pit of darkness*.

W. 22,335: *Selbstthätigkeit*. App. 2,331: *exertion of his powers*.

W. 23,24: jeder dünkt sich *wunderoriginal* zu sein. App. 3,24: Each thinks himself a *man of marvelous originality*.

Wan. 178: *blumenreichen* Garten. Trav. 141: *gay flowery garden*.

Wan. 276: *geistermässig* entfernt. Trav. 202: into *spiritual remoteness*.

In addition to the compounds, Carlyle employed some un-English word-constructions:

W. 21,124: *bei Zeiten*. App. 1,122: *timefully*.

W. 21,198: ihre *Deutschheit*. App. 1,195: their *Germanships*.¹⁸

¹⁸ Cf. Otto Schmeding: *Über Wortbildung bei Carlyle*, p. 346. Schmeding cites *Germanship* with a list of similar constructions, as instances of German influence.

W. 21,297: *bestäubt*. App. 1,295: *bedusted*.¹⁷

W. 21,304: *einer sonderbaren Verkleidung*. App. 1,302: a singular *disguisement*.

W. 22,96: *betrat*. App. 2,95: *betrod*.

W. 22,153: *wurden unterschrieben*. App. 2,153: and were now *a-signing*.

W. 23,267: *bethören*. App. 3,253: *befool*.

W. 23,303: *heilsam*. App. 3,288: *salutiferous*.¹⁸

Wan. 314: *Mythen*. Trav. 226: *Mythuses*.

Wan. 340: *fördersam*. Trav. 242: *furtherosome*.¹⁹

Wan. 408: *disharmonische*. Trav. 282: *disharmonical*.²⁰

Aside from his treatment of isolated words, Carlyle's disposition of the many successive adjectives that appear in *Wilhelm Meister* deserves brief attention. The adjective in English must ordinarily be used more cautiously than in German,²¹ where it bears heavy stress in the sentence, and is capable of innumerable, colorful combinations. To this customary lavish use, Goethe adds the tendency—especially in the latter period of his life—to employ his adjectives in serried ranks of three, for an effect of lengthened suspense and emphasis. So marked is this characteristic, that Gustav Roethe chose it as one of the touchstones, by which he determines the date of composition of Goethe's *Mädchen von Oberkirch*,²² where such constructions as “*das Volk . . . wird ihm zu stark, zu mächtig, zu gewaltsam*,” prevail. Carlyle, for the most part, translates literally the abundant adjectives of his text, without attempting to circumvent this necessity by an occasional deletion, or by a transfer of the meaning from the adjective to a verb. As a result his sentences fairly stagger under the load.

¹⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 327, a list of Carlyle's coinages with *be* prefix is given, such as *bedrift*, *bedrug*, etc.

¹⁸ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 346, *majestious*, *ranous*, etc.

¹⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 346, *worksome*, etc.

²⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 334, *auroral*, *accipitral*, etc. These formations, which Schmeding quotes from Carlyle's works, have their earliest proto-types in his translation, a significant fact.

²¹ Cf. Otto Jespersen, *Growth and Structure of the English Language*, p. 133, “. . . in a great many cases it is really contrary to the genius of the language to use an adjective at all.”

²² Cf. Gustav Roethe, *Über Goethes Mädchen von Oberkirch*, p. 502.

W. 21,220: *reiner, herzlicher und geistreicher*. App. 1,217: *a purer, more affecting, and more spiritual manner*.

W. 22,127: *Die dunklen, heftigen, unbestimmten*. App. 2,127: *These dark, vague, vehement tones*.

Wan. 187: Wenn dieser sich in einem *gemeinen, gewöhnlichen, fasslichen* Bilde verkörpert, so dass er uns als lebendig, *gegenwärtig, wirklich* entgegentritt. Trav. 149: When this embodies itself in a *common, customary, comprehensible* figure, so that it meets us as if *alive, present, actual*.

Wan. 254: und stand *verwundert, erstaunt, erschrocken*. Trav. 191: and stood *surprised, amazed, affrighted*.

Wan. 260: mit *geistreicher, wohlgezeichneter und ausgeführter* Staffage. Trav. 192: with *rich, well-imagined and well-executed* additions.

Wan. 275: ein *lustig bequem gefälliges* Schiff. Trav. 201: a *cheerful, commodious, social* bark.

Wan. 278: er gehörte zu jenen *beweglichen, thätig gewandten*. Trav. 203: to that *nimble, active, dexterous* class.

Leopold observes that the use of three adjectives, the building of a sentence in tiers,²² is characteristic of Carlyle's style, and he ultimately traces this inclination back to a fundamental desire to preach and prophecy. This would not conflict with the possibility of influence of the style of the *Wanderjahre*, for there also, Goethe assumes the rôle of the wise preceptor rather than of the narrator who has no message but his tale.

Of minor importance is the translation of names, which is oddly inconsistent. The women characters, apparently, must submit to the Anglicizing of their names:

Mariane = Mariana.

Philine = Philina.

Therese = Theresa.

Aurelie = Aurelia.

Natalie = Natalia.

while Friedrich, on the other hand, is not anglicized to Frederick, and Wilhelm Meister remains inviolate.

²² Cf. Werner Leopold, *Die religiöse Wurzel von Carlyles literarischer Wirksamkeit dargestellt an seinem Aufsatz State of German Literature* (1827), p. 77.

A host of excellent renderings, which speak for themselves, could be set over against the flaws of Carlyle's translation. He has for instances admirably retained the occasional alliterative effects of the original:

W. 22,33: *wanken noch weichen*. App. 2,33: *flinch or fail*.

W. 22,53: *zu stampfen, zu schimpfen und zu schreien*. App. 2,51: *to stamp and scold and squeal*.

W. 22,74: *bei den Todten ist keine Hülfe, und an den Lebendigen kein Halt*. App. 2,73: *with the dead there is no help, on the living no hold*.

W. 22,129: *mit Wissen und Willen*. App. 2,129: *wittingly and willingly*.

W. 22,157: *gestoppeltes und gestückeltes Wesen*. App. 2,157: *patched and piecework matter*.

Furthermore there are countless vivid translations, which with swift intuition penetrate to the very core of the German expressions they aim to approximate. To quote only a few instances:

W. 21,54: *aus der Quelle geschöpftem Golde*. App. 1,54: *of true gold from the furnace and the mine*.

W. 21,124: *den Thoren, den er im Busen hegt zu verabschieden*. App. 1,122: *from casting out the idols which he worships in his soul*.

W. 21,128: *was beunruhiget die Menschen*. App. 1,126: *what is it that keeps men in continued discontent and agitation*.

W. 21,288: *wie sie sich hinter kostbar gewirkten Tapeten verbergen*. App. 1,286: *as it works concealed behind the gorgeous tapestry of palaces*.

W. 21,218: *jeder Winkel ist vollgepfropft und jedes Gesims besetzt*. App. 1,296: *every corner is crammed, every crevice is possessed*.

W. 22,28: *um bewegliche und falsche Höflinge zu verachten und spöttisch mit ihnen zu spielen*. App. 2,28: *despise the false and changeful insects of a court, and play with them in easy scorn*.

W. 22,183: *der herrliche Genuss*. App. 2,183: *the lordly joy*.
(A translation which brings into sharp relief the original meaning of the German *Herr-lich*.)

W. 22,248: bei so einer Vermischung eines Theaters. App. 2,247: with such a mongrel theatre.

W. 22,289: wo alles gleichgültig oder toll ist. App. 2,287: where everything was either cold indifference or hot insanity.

W. 23,131: durch ein neues Organ. App. 3,124: with unscaled eyes.

These illustrations are representative of whole passages and pages of admirable rendering that Carlyle achieved when he abandoned his theories in the flux of practice, and gave English equivalents that stand, not subservient imitations, but equals beside the German.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The flaws and graces of Carlyle's translation of *Wilhelm Meister* may, in the main, be attributed to two causes: the intolerable strain of literary work, performed regularly, with little regard to health or inclination, and the subjective attitude governing his labors.

The hack-work element of his toil must not be underrated. To accomplish ten pages of translation¹ at the close of a busy day is no mean feat. When we add to this, moods of profound depression, arising from a wretched state of chronic dyspepsia,² as well as from the melancholy that besets idealistic youth, dismayed by the careless ways of the world, the task assumes formidable proportions. The most ardent enthusiasm is apt to be quenched by the inexorable wet-blanket of routine, and it is this obvious but potent factor which must be held responsible for many unanimated pages of the translation.

The impossibility of a purely objective attitude has been alleged from the cat of the nursery rhyme, who, on her well-known visit to London's queen, saw only "a little mouse under a chair," to Master Anatole France, who held that in literary criticism it does not exist.³ In *Wilhelm Meister* Carlyle had found a convincing reply to his own doubts and questionings and so, not merely an objective estimate of the book, but a strong personal urge impelled him to the translation. Having once embarked on his task, there were many aspects that he, as a man of strong principles and decided tastes, rejected. The limitations of his rendering are often due to a limitation of his sympathies. The excellent, vivid passages frequently impress one as a release of individuality from the leash of plodding faithfulness. Hence it may well be questioned if the subjective element is to be held

¹ Augustus Ralli, *Guide to Carlyle*, Vol. 1, p. 29.

² *Ibid.*, p. 29.

³ Cf. *The Nation* (New York), Nov. 12, 1924, p. 512.

utterly in disgrace, or whether it does not rather sponsor the excellencies of a translation in much the same way as a virtuoso, by his execution, sharpens our appreciation for the music he is interpreting. In reading over the fragments of Shelley's translations, one is always entranced by the clear beauty of his language. Whether he has concerned himself with Homer or Moschus, Calderón or Goethe, he has seized upon the spirit of the original and has revealed it in language of unfailing enchantment. If we compare his *Faust* rendering with the corresponding passages of Bayard Taylor's translation of "photographic fidelity,"⁴ we find, aside from more formal divergence, one essential difference: the difference between quick and cold. Translations should not furnish their texts with new beauties, but neither should they serve as *ponies*, beaten into spiritless docility.

Apart from an evaluation of Carlyle's translation as a reproduction of Goethe's text and as a literary achievement, it is an important commentary on his personality. Leopold compares Carlyle's rendition of a passage by Horn, cited in *The State of German Literature*, with the original, and reaches the conclusion that, notwithstanding superficial fidelity, subtle, significant changes have been wrought.⁵ Even after the analysis of one short paragraph he asserts that Carlyle's peculiarities become evident in his translations. For a student of Carlyle these should accordingly prove an effective means of checking up conclusions; for omissions and additions, under- or over-emphasis, expertness and garbling are all puissant signs of the functioning of a mind in all its intricate complexity.

⁴ Cf. Juliana Haskell, *Taylor's Goethe's Faust*, p. 88.

⁵ Cf. Werner Leopold, *Die religiöse Wurzel von Carlyles literarischer Wirksamkeit dargestellt an seinem Aufsatz State of German Literature* (1827), pp. 91 ff.

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VITA

I was born in New York City, February 15, 1894. After a preliminary education in public and private schools of that city and in private schools in Wiesbaden, Dresden and Berlin, I entered Barnard College in 1912 and in 1915 received the degree of A.B. In 1916-1917 I studied German literature at Columbia University under the late Professor Calvin Thomas and Dr. Traugott Böhme and received the degree of A.M. in 1917. In 1917-1918 I was Fellow at Bryn Mawr College, where I studied German literature under the late Professor Karl Jessen and was awarded the Anna Ottendorfer European Fellowship. In 1918-1919 I taught French and Spanish at the Radnor High School, Wayne, Pa. In 1919 I married Dr. William Alexander Perlzweig. Since 1922 I have studied at the Johns Hopkins University, taking courses in German literature and philology under Professors William Kurrelmeyer and Hermann Collitz, and Spanish under Señor José Robles y Pazos.

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